# DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 359 577 CS 508 215

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|---|---|
| TITLE | As They Liked It: The Tragical-Comical-Pastoral Drama of Elizabethan Theatre. Curriculum Projects. The Huntington Theatre Company's Master Works Study in Shakespeare. |
| INSTITUTION | Huntington Theatre Co., Boston, MA. |
| SPONS AGENCY | National Endowment for the Humanities (NFAH), Washington, D.C. |
| PUB DATE | Feb 93 |
| NOTE | 422p.; Some of the handwritten and photocopied materials have several reproducibility problems. |
| AVAILABLE FROM | Director of Education, Huntington Theatre Company, 264 Huntington Avenue, Boston, MA 02115. |
| PUB TYPE | Guides - Classroom Use - Teaching Guides (For Teacher) (052) |
| EDRS PRICE | MF01/PC17 Plus Postage. |
| DESCRIPTORS | Class Activities; *Drama; *Dramatics; High Schools; Learning Activities; Lesson Plans; Teaching Methods; Units of Study |
| IDENTIFIERS | Elizabethan Drama; *Shakespeare (William) |

ABSTRACT

Developed by the participants of the Huntington Theatre Company's Master Works Study in Shakespeare, this collection presents single lesson plans and unit plans for teaching Elizabethan drama. The collection presents 12 lesson plans (spanning one or a few days of instruction) and 15 unit plans (ranging over several weeks) suitable for secondary school students of varying ability levels. "Hamlet," "Romeo and Juliet," and "Julius Caesar" each are the subject of several of the lesson plans and unit plans. (RS)

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The Huntington Theatre Company's
Master Works Study
in
Shakespeare

# *As They Liked It:*
# *The Tragical-Comical-Pastoral*
# *Drama of*
# *Elizabethan Theatre*

## Curriculum Projects

February 2 - April 13, 1993

CS508215

This curriculum is made possible by a grant from
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These curricular ideas were developed
by the participants of the
Huntington Theatre Company's
Master Works Study in Shakespeare.

They are divided into two sections:

1) Single Lesson Plans,
2) Unit Plans.

The lessons and unit plans
are in order of the dates of the various plays.

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These curricular projects are made possible by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

# LESSON PLANS

Patricia Maye-Wilson
Madison Park High School
March 16, 1993
Masterworks-Elizabethan Period

Philosophy/rationale for the lesson: Very often special education students have no idea of Shakespeare but a quote from, "Hamlet," "To be or not to be, that is the question." The is lesson is designed to expand their knowledge, to give them new exposure and to teach them some critical anaylsis critical writing and critical thinking. These experiences will provoke dynamic discussion as well among students and teacher. The students will perhaps have an everlasting memory and verbal exchange and wonderful interaction among themselves.

Infact the thought of Shakespeare generally turn special needs students off--They begin to surmise that Shakespeare is dull, too conventional, too difficult to understand. This lesson is design to create a real interest and active learning for special needs students by integrating dramatic, suspenseful and action films and written literature for viweing and discussion. Therefore, the lesson has to be broken down to the special needs students world, their language and their culture. Once the students become energized with a sense of true belonging and true belief--they may even visualize themselvesas the Shakespearean or other character. If only the teacher can successfully find that "sucker" (turned-on) moment, then the special education student can buy into the education that is being taught.

Description of students: This lesson is designed for 45 moderate special needs student in grades 9-12. These students are very active and very much turned-off by academics. These students are in an alternative educational setting.

Goals/purpose of the lesson: Students will take a close-up look at relationships and how to improve relationships.

Students will analyze the motives for the characters like Romeo and Juliet (Shakespeare) and Maria and Tony (Westside Story) falling in love.

Students will compare other films such as, "Fatal Attraction," and "Boys N' Hood" with the characters in the Shakespearan play "Romeo and Juliet" and in the film "Westside Story."

Students will select atleast one Elizabethan character or one modern day character and act out the character.

Details of the lesson: The teacher will provide some brief background about the purpose of the lesson. There will be a handwout provided in a chart form with 3 columns which will read: (What's) Stable/Unstable/Possible Resolutions. The chart will be used to record written expression to be shared in discussions and to be given to the teacher at the end of the lesson. Immediately after students have read excerpts with the teacher and after viewing each excerpts from each film the students will record his/her response/impression. Vocabulary definitions will be dealt with as the lesson moves along. Also, some suggested vocabulary maybe written on the chalkboard to use for responding, just in case a student may become choked-up on words.

Suggested activities: Pick your favorite character from one of these stories (film/book) and do a quick scene of that particular character. The teacher may want to videotape this activity. Each student will get 30 seconds and no more than 60 seconds to act out character. No props are used. Each student may do a verbal or a non-verbal activity, but it must be believable.

Another activity which require a more intense purpose is: Each student will write/create your oun story with an Elizabethan setting. It should be at least 3-5 pages. Afterwards, the class will try to create its own Elizabethan play using parts of the written stories. The students will create the customs from recycled materials.

Suggested questions for the initial lesson: What magic lead the couples to each other? What happened when the couples first met? Who continually came in between them? What scene was the most intimate scene? What drove Tony in the alley to danger? Why did Maria lie to her family? Why is there so much fear, love, not too much stableness or happiness in each one of these relationships? Which one of these relationships would be considered "fatal attraction?" Why are the couples from the wrong side of the tracks or fence?

Resources: Current news articles on relationships of lovers, friends, individuals, gangs, families and community, documentaries, other related films, create youth related workshops/conferences, participate in community youth related activities (church, youth clubs, etc.), group dynamics discussions.

Books: Romeo and Juliet by William Shakespeare, The Complete Works of Shakespeare--Films: "Boys N' Hood," "Fatal Attraction,"and "Westside Story." Important: A letter of explanation may need to be written and signed by students parents.

James Marino
TWO-DAY LESSON PLAN

This lesson plan is designed for my sophomores at a Catholic high school. The kids are largely working class; come from Boston, Cambridge, and Somerville; often have immigrant parents and speak a language besides English at home; and despise any literature or poetry, let alone Shakespeare. My goal is to let them see Shakespeare as someone besides an old fogey inflicted on them by English teachers. My introductory lesson plan is designed to tune them into the comic and anti-authoritarian side of the "living" Shakespeare.

DAY ONE.

A. Good old fashioned lecture to start out, giving background on the theatre of Shakespeare's time. Emphasis on the quasi-illegal and socially undesirable aspect of Elizabethan theatre, such as the need to keep public performances outside the city limits, and actors' need for a noble patron to protect them from arrest.

B. A quick outline of Marlowe and Jonson, to give a sense of A) Shakespeare's literary environment, and B) the rough and tumble of his world, including Marlowe and Jonson's jail sentences and violent lives.

C. Opening description of Elizabethan tragedy before Shakespeare. Quick outlines of the over-the-top violence and craziness in The Spanish Tragedy, Titus Andronicus and other plays. Mention the all-encompassing audience for these plays, from aristocrats to groundlings, and the strict division between tragedy and comedy in literary theory.

DAY TWO.

A. Hand out a list of Shakespearean insults. Especially include words like "Zounds" as well as Kent's long rant in King Lear Act II, scene ii, lines 1-40.

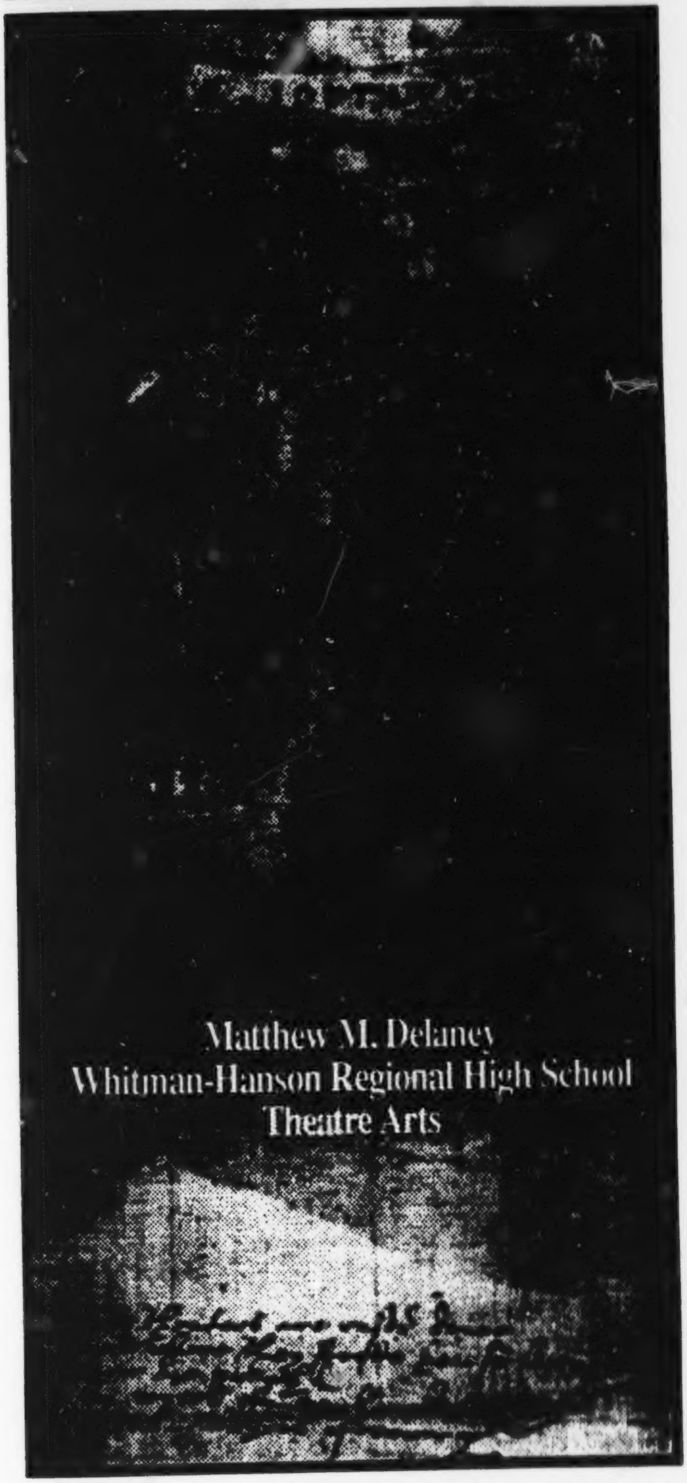
B. A rehearsed comic reading by the teacher of a Polonius monologue and/or some jokes by the Gravedigger in Hamlet. Consider renting Steve Martin's L.A. Story and showing the moderninzed gravedigger scene from that.

C. Once the teacher has taken the acting plunge, encourage the students to do some of their own renditions of the lines from the handout. Remind them that phrases like "zounds' and "God's blood" are PROFANITY, and should be said with the same intonation they use for words you can't repeat to them.

If they ever settle down or get tired of insulting each other, as several of mine will not, you can move them into reciting other short lines.

# Master Works Institute

## One-Day Curriculum
## Introduction to Shakespearean Theatre



Matthew M. Delaney
Whitman-Hanson Regional High School
Theatre Arts

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## PHILOSOPHY

1. This session is designed to introduce students to a basic understanding and appreciation of Elizabethan theatre to foster a more sympathetic understanding of the intent of both the writings and performances of the works of William Shakespeare from a more personal view than those that they may have considered in the past. The lesson is also designed to impart a contemporary basis for the judgement and interpretation of language and its relationship to the physical structure of the Elizabethan theatre for the students.

## DESCRIPTION OF STUDENTS

2. This lesson will be presented to a Theatre Arts I class consisting of grade 10-12, predominantly college-track, students at a middle class suburban regional high school. Theatre Arts is a one-semester elective course offered within the Fine Arts/Music program. The class make-up is generally composed of two or three students who have had moderate experience in acting but not in the study of dramatic performance, along with the remainder (15-20/ majority) of students from a variety of backgrounds who generally have had little or no experience in acting/theatre. In the past, natural talent and enthusiasm has been consistently high.

## GOALS/PURPOSE OF LESSON

3. Theatre Arts is an excellent motivator, and can provide the impetus for more in-depth study in related areas. It is also an effective means of increasing aesthetic awareness of theatrical writings and performance. Through observation, interpretation and performance, Theatre Arts can be a powerful tool for the development of life-long communications skills. With this understanding, this introductory lesson provides an additional awareness of the social and historical influences required to understand and more fully appreciate the writings of period pieces—in this example Shakespearean drama. It highlights the necessity to focus on an understanding of the human drama in relation to a time and people that appreciated the fine points of the manipulation of language for a specific purpose, while avoiding the trap of misdirecting unnecessary attention towards period slang and dated word usage.

## DETAILS OF LESSON PLAN

4A. Initial discussions focus on the fantasies and illusions evident in everyday life. The class discussion begins with simple dreams and common expectations. Then, we progress to a discussion of the powerful illusion created in a quality written work and how involved the reader becomes when they can place themselves within the grasp of author's imaginary setting. The class then discusses cinema versions where this also may have occurred. The importance of this total immersion of imagination is discussed in relation to street performers that members of the class have seen. Their ability to provide a quality performance depends upon the audiences ability to place themselves within the confines determined by the performance, rather than the locale.

4B. Shakespeare wrote during a time of rapid and powerful changes in England. People were thirsting for new knowledge and discoveries. There was tremendous pride in the fact that England had recently defeated the Spanish Armada, and was now considered the preeminent world power on the high seas. England also had recently broken away from the Church of Rome, and all of this was exemplified by the proud brash, energy displayed by the English people. The audiences began to demand this same level of excitement, action and sophistication in their entertainment, and the writers responded with performance pieces that catered to their demands.

4C. The (physical/construction) state of theatre design at that time was still in an evolutionary stage, and did not provide for an equivalent level of sophistication for the staging of works.* When Shakespearean works were first performed, the props, scenery and costumes provided little in the way of visual support. Therefore, it was up to the author to provide for the illusion of visual imagery through the talented and skillful use of language to augment the action on stage. This lesson breaks the use and importance of the proper presentation of language down into a simple analogy.

4D.
- —The students are assigned a reading piece to acquaint them with the background of the Elizabethan acting troupe and common theatre design during the time of William Shakespeare.*
- —Each student is handed a few pieces of wood, straw bundles, or mortar mix samples prior to the day's discussions.

4E. The following questions are asked:
- —What do you think these are?
- —Do you know what they are used for?
- —If a theatre can be built out of wood and thatch and mortar, why doesn't our pile of building supplies look like a theatre?
- —How can you relate words to these pieces of construction materials?
- —Then, an example has the potential to capture the attention of the audience. The introduction of movement and action can add an additional dimension to the performance work.

* *See the hand-out regarding acting troupes and Elizabethan theatre.*

—What place does action/movement play in helping the audience to understand the author's intent?
—How important is the appropriateness of the action or movement to the theme?

The answers to these questions relate to the idea that "construction materials" in and of themselves do not make up any structure, just as "words" in and of themselves do not make up any literary or performance piece. The value to be derived from the study and performance of a work comes from understanding the intent of the artist with respect to the time in which it was created. However, its true strength lies not so much in its ability to be understood within the context of its own time, but to be understood and appreciated for all times.

### EVALUATION

1. Since this lesson is limited to such a brief period of time, the overall evaluation would be on-going throughout the semester. However, an initial evaluation would be related to the enthusiasm and participation of the students in the related performance projects.
2. Ability to understand and interpret language concepts describing action and visualization contained within the Elizabethan language structure.
3. Use and understanding of the power of language within the dramatic structure in their own class performances, and how the study of the development of drama throughout history can become a personal voyage of discovery.

### RELATED ASSIGNMENT

1. Assign an improvisation based upon a story that has been handed down and retold within their own family structure, and relate it to the class with a specific emphasis upon the *verbalization* of visual imagery.

## ACTING TROUPES

Although there were many acting troupes in England before the 1570s, little is known of them. For example, at least 20 different companies played at court between 1558 and 1574, but little information about them, beyond the bare mention of the performances, is recorded. In these early years, patrons probably paid their actors a fixed yearly sum and allowed them to give public performances to earn additional money. Since the number of days upon which troupes could play varied with the place and season of the year, the actors led an uncertain existence.

During the 1570s, after new governmental decrees were issued, conditions for actors became more favorable, for it was probably the crown's sanction of daily performances that stimulated the building of permanent theatres in London and the assembling of larger companies. The first important troupe was the Earl of Leicester's Men, licensed in 1574. It was headed by James Burbage (1530–1597), also the builder of the first permanent theatre in London.

The next major troupe dates from 1583, when the Master of Revels chose from other companies the 12 best actors, who then were named the Queen's Men. This troupe was considered the best in England until 1593. The great plague of 1592–1593 forced many companies to dissolve or to amalgamate with others. Out of this crisis emerged two companies who thereafter were to vie for preeminence: the Lord Admiral's Men, under the leadership of Edward Alleyn and with the financial backing of Philip Henslowe; and the Lord Chamberlain's Men, a cooperative venture of the Burbage family and the leading actors of the company. When James I came to the throne in 1603, the latter company was renamed the King's Men, a title which it retained until 1642. Between 1603 and 1611 there were three adult troupes, and after that time four. Occasionally these were reconstituted or amalgamated, but all remained under the patronage of some member of the royal family. The more important troupes were Queen Anne's Men (1603–1619), Prince Henry's Men (1603–1612), Palsgrave's Men (1612–1631), Prince Charles' Men (1631–1642), Lady Elizabeth's Men (1611–1632), and Queen Henrietta's Men (1625–1642).

Royal patronage increased in still other ways after 1603. Elizabeth had seen an average of about five professional productions each year, for each of which she paid the companies a standard fee of 10 pounds. Although the Stuart kings paid the same basic fee, James I saw an average of 17 and Charles I an average of 25 productions each year. Thus, the income derived from performances at court greatly increased during the 17th century. Each actor in the royal companies was also paid by his patron a yearly fee of 5 pounds and he was given allowances for food, light, and fuel. Occasionally the troupes were given additional sums to buy new costumes or to tide them over during times when playing for the general public was impossible. In return, actors were called upon to help out with the court masques and to perform on special state occasions. Most court performances by professional troupes were given in the evening so as not to interfere with the public performances, which took place in the afternoons. Thus, the troupes benefited considerably from their attachments to the royal household. Since the plays given at court were usually those played for the general public, there was not that sharp division between the court and public theatres which characterized the Italian stage. On the other hand, some critics have suggested that increased concern for the taste of the court was partially responsible for the decline in vigor of the English drama after 1610.

Despite court patronage, companies relied primarily upon the public for support. But to produce the plays professionally required considerable financial resources. Most of the acting companies in the years between 1558 and 1642 were organized on the sharing plan, under which financial risk and profits were divided among the members. The number of sharers varied, for not all actors were shareholders. Originally the sharing system was probably used as a means of raising capital, but it later became a way of rewarding valued members of the company and insuring their continued service by including them in the management. Additional incentives were offered in some companies by making actors "householders," or part owners of the theatre building. Generous payments were also made to shareholders when they retired after a specified period of service.

The shareholders formed a self-governing, democratic body that selected and produced plays. Each shareholder also probably had some specific responsibility within the company, such as supervision of properties or costumes, business management, acting, or writing plays.

It is difficult to estimate the income of a sharing actor, for financial practices were complex. After each performance, the shareholders divided the money left after meeting all expenses (which included payments to authors, "hired men," and the fund out of which the "common stock" of costumes, properties, and other materials was purchased). In a court suit of 1635, one witness stated that shareholders in the King's Men earned about 180 pounds annually, although the actors themselves estimated their earnings at 50 pounds. Even the latter figure, however, is about twice the amount earned by skilled workers at that time. Undoubtedly the King's Men was the most affluent company, but so long as performances were not interrupted by forced closures, the major actors in all companies were probably well off.

More than half the members of each troupe were "hired men" employed under a two-year contract at a salary equivalent to that earned by a skilled laborer. In addition to acting, the hired men also served as stage managers, wardrobe keepers, prompters, and musicians. The size of companies ranged from about 10 to 25 persons; consequently, double casting was essential to fill all the roles.

The company was further augmented by boys apprenticed to well-established adult actors. It is normally assumed that boys played all of the women's roles, although this is by no means certain. Older women, especially the comic ones, may have been played by men. Little is known about the apprentices. The age of beginning has been estimated variously as from 6 to 14 years, and that of termination from 18 to 21. The apprentices lived with their masters, who trained, fed, and clothed them. The masters were paid by the company for the boys' services. Some of the apprentices went on to become adult actors, but many followed other professions upon reaching maturity.

Most troupes sought to acquire a permanent home, and after 1603 most succeeded in doing so. Before that time and during forced closures, many had to tour. Companies often went bankrupt during closures, or, if they survived, they did so only by selling their stock of plays or by mortgaging their costumes.

Touring entailed many problems, for outside of London there were no permanent theatres. Thus, though it might have a license to perform, a troupe could be denied the right to play on the grounds that there was no suitable place, that the danger of plague was too great, or for other reasons. Upon arriving in a town, a company presented its credentials to the mayor, who usually requested that a performance be given before the council and other important persons. If the local group was pleased, it rewarded the actors with a payment from the council's funds and authorized additional performances for the public. Often the city hall was used for playing, but if refused its use, the troupe might perform in an inn or some other public place. In some cities, actors were welcomed, but in others they were paid not to perform. A number of troupes toured on the continent during closures, and it was from these itinerant English companies that the professional theatre in Germany descended.

Since companies both in and out of London changed their bills daily, they needed a sizable repertory. Plays were retained as long as they drew audiences and might be revised when they declined in popularity. The demand for new works made companies seek liaisons with dependable dramatists, many of whom worked under contract. Until about 1603 the average payment for a play was 6 pounds, but by 1613 the price had risen to 10 or 12 pounds. After about 1610, in addition to his fee, a playwright was given all of the receipts beyond a certain amount at the second performance. By the 1630s, a few writers were being paid a weekly salary and given one benefit performance for each play supplied to the company.

Once the playwright's fees had been paid, the play belonged to the troupe. Since there were no copyright laws, however, companies had no means of maintaining exclusive performance rights except by keeping plays out of the hands of others. The more popular works were often pirated by printers, and troupes sometimes sold publication rights during times of financial stress.

Every play had to be submitted to the Master of Revels for licensing before performance. The principal result was the elimination of passages thought to be morally or politically objectionable. The company seems to have had only one complete copy of each play. In it (the prompt book) were made all necessary notes relating to performance: cues for sound, music, special effects, exits and entrances, and notations about properties. Actors were merely given "sides," which included only their own lines and cues.

Probably one of the shareholders rehearsed each play with the aid of the author, whose attendance was required, although his responsibilities are unclear. As a rule, a playwright knew in advance for which troupe he was writing and could tailor his work to the size of the company and to the skills of individual actors.

The prompter (sometimes called the bookholder or bookkeeper) was responsible for running performances, as well as for copying out the actors' sides and making lists of the necessary properties, costumes, and music. During performances a "plot," or skeletal outline of the action (indicating entrances, exits, properties, music, the names of players to be called, and similar information), was hung up backstage for quick reference. Seven of these plots have survived.

Each company had elaborate rules of conduct and fines for their infringement. For example, in 1614 Lady Elizabeth's Men agreed upon this schedule of fines: 1 shilling for lateness to rehearsals; 3 shillings for lateness to performance; 10 shillings for being intoxicated during a performance; 20 shillings for missing a performance; and 40 pounds for taking company property.

The names of many actors between 1558 and 1642 are known, but few performers achieved lasting renown. Richard Tarleton ( ? –1588), a member of the Queen's Men and an accomplished comic and musical performer, was the first English actor to win a wide following. The first great actor was Edward Alleyn (1566–1626), who created Marlowe's Faustus, Tamburlaine, and Barabbas, and Kyd's Heironimo. He gave up acting about 1604, but continued in management with his father-in-law, Philip Henslowe. Other members of Alleyn's company were John Singer, Richard Jones, Thomas Towne, Martin Slater, Edward Juby, Thomas Downton, and Samuel Rowley.

The members of the Lord Chamberlain's Men gained more lasting fame because Shakespeare was one of their fellow players. The leading performer was Richard Burbage (*c.* 1567–1619), who created such roles as Richard III, Hamlet, Lear, and Othello, and was generally acknowledged to be the greatest actor of his age. Other members of the company included William Kempe ( ? –*c.* 1603), noted for his low comedy acting and jigs; Augustine Philips ( ? –1605); Henry Condell ( ? –1627); John Heminges (1556–1630), the business manager; William Sly ( ? –1608); Thomas Pope ( ? –1604); Robert Armin (*c.* 1568–1615), a celebrated clown; John Lowin (*c.* 1567–*c.* 1659), noted for his Falstaff and Henry VIII; Joseph Taylor (*c.* 1585–1652), who replaced Burbage when he died in 1619; and Nathan Field (1587–1620), considered by many as second only to Burbage.

In addition to the adult companies, there were a number of children's troupes. In the 16th century these were made up almost entirely of choir boys at court chapels or cathedrals. The boys were given a good education, and it was under the guise of training in elocution and deportment that masters exploited their students' talents by staging plays, to which they charged admission. Following a scandal in the early 17th century, the use of choir boys in plays declined, but other school boys continued to make up the companies. Troupes of children were especially popular from about 1576 to 1584, and again from 1600 to about 1610. By far the best of these troupes was the Chapel Boys (after 1604, the Queen's Revels) between 1600 and 1608. The finest dramatists of the day, with the exception of Shakespeare, wrote for this company, which catered to a more educated and sophisticated audience than did the adult troupes. The decline of child companies may be explained in part by the adult troupes' acquisition of both theatres and plays which had formerly been associated with the boys.

FIGURE 6.2 The yard of the Tabard Inn, London. This sketch was made just before the inn was destroyed in the 19th century. Supposedly the yard had remained unchanged since the time of Elizabeth I. Although the Tabard was probably not used for plays, it illustrates the arrangement of the innyard in Elizabethan times. (From Thornbury, *Old and New London*)

The acting style of the Elizabethan performer can only be guessed at. Some scholars have labeled it "formal" and others "realistic." Some of the conditions which suggest a "formal" style are the performance of female roles by male actors; the nonrealistic style of the scripts; the conventionalized stage background; and the large repertory, which would have made detailed characterizations difficult. Arguments for a relatively realistic style include Shakespeare's "advice to the players" in *Hamlet*; contemporary references to the convincing characterizations given by such actors as Burbage; the emphasis upon contemporary life and manners in many comedies; the truthfulness of human psychology portrayed in the serious plays; and the closeness of audience to actors during performances. Judging by contemporary accounts, many actors moved audiences with the power and "truth" of their playing, but this tells little about their style, for what is considered "truth in acting" varies markedly from one period to another. The most that one can say is that the better actors adapted well to contemporary conceptions of artistic truth.

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## THE PUBLIC THEATRES

In 1576 the first permanent theatres in England were opened. One, The Theatre, was an open-air structure designed for a general public; the other, the Blackfriars, was remodeled from rooms in a former monastery for an aristocratic audience. It is customary to call structures of the first type "public," and those of the second "private" theatres. Both types were in use until 1642, and after 1610 the same companies might use both according to the time of the year.

By the 1570s there were two well-established traditions in staging: the outdoor and the indoor. The religious cycles, street pageants, tournaments, and morality plays had been given out of doors, and the companies attached to noble houses often played outside when on tour. On the other hand, mummings, disguisings, interludes, and special entertainments were normally given indoors; touring players often performed in town halls, manor houses, or inns. Consequently, there were many precedents upon which the Elizabethan troupes could draw when building permanent theatres.

The unroofed public theatres are usually traced from two sources, innyards and gaming arenas. It is certain that many troupes played in inns both before and after permanent theatres were built, and that at least six inns in London were used as theatres. The usual reconstructions of innyard theatres show a booth-like stage set up at one side of a courtyard, while the inn's permanent galleries provide seating on a raised level and the yard serves as a place where spectators can stand. The permanent theatre structures are then said to be a formalization of this arrangement. Recently a few scholars have questioned the widespread use of innyards for playing, arguing that troupes normally played indoors. The principal arguments for indoor playing are that the use of the yards would have seriously disrupted the inn's normal activities, and that actors chose to play inside whenever they could. Certainly, all of the London inns known to have been used by actors were "carrier" inns (that is, they catered to drivers of wagons carrying goods to and from London). If wagons arrived at irregular intervals, closing off the yard would probably have interfered with this business. On the other hand, admission fees and the increase in tavern sales during performances may have been sufficiently profitable that the innkeeper abandoned the carrier trade or forbade drivers to arrive during playing hours. Although many of the performances at inns may have been indoors, especially during the winter months, some were certainly outdoors. Thus, the innyards could well have supplied a precedent for the permanent theatres.

The arenas used for bull or bear baiting and wrestling or fencing have also been cited as possible prototypes for the unroofed structures. Some scholars have argued that the theatres were formed merely by setting up a removable booth stage in an arena (which could be used for other purposes when not needed for plays). Such an argument depends upon the belief that baiting rings with multi-leveled galleries for spectators existed before 1576. That such was the case, however, is open to doubt, for much of the evidence upon which this view rests is now known to have been forged, while a close examination of the map-views of London suggests that the baiting rings depicted in them are corral-like enclosures rather than galleried structures. Thus, it is uncertain whether The Theatre was influenced by baiting or fencing rings.

Another possible source, less frequently cited, is illustrations published in editions of Terence's works. Some of these show open-air, galleried, circular structures labeled *"Theatrum."* Since the troupes were in the service of aristocratic and educated patrons, these illustrations may have come to their attention. Perhaps this explains why Burbage called his building The Theatre, a term not in common use at that time and certainly not normally applied to an amphitheatrical or round structure such as The Theatre supposedly was.

The stage itself is thought to have been derived from such diverse sources as the pageant wagons and fixed platforms of the religious plays and the booth stages of traveling players. The facade erected at the rear of the main acting area of public theatres seems to have much in common with the "screen" found in manor halls. Thus, the possible influences on the public theatres are numerous, but no direct connection with any can be established.

The first permanent theatre was built by James Burbage in 1576 in Shoreditch, just outside the north-

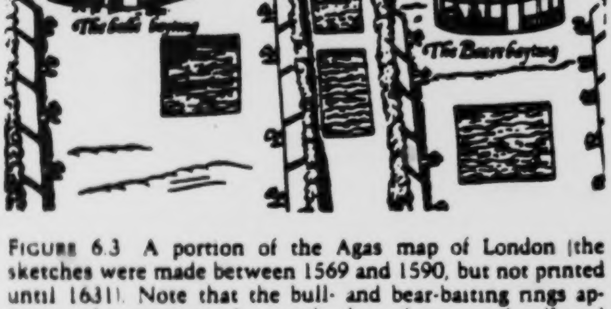


FIGURE 6.3 A portion of the Agas map of London (the sketches were made between 1569 and 1590, but not printed until 1631). Note that the bull- and bear-baiting rings appear to be more nearly corrals than three-tiered galleried structures.

ern limits of London. It is usually assumed that the site was chosen to escape the London authorities, who frequently forbade performances within the city. But the choice may also have been influenced by the lack of available land in the city and the fact that Shoreditch was a popular recreational area. Regardless of his reasons, Burbage's decision to build a permanent theatre was revolutionary. It indicates a faith in the future of the theatre that was amply justified.

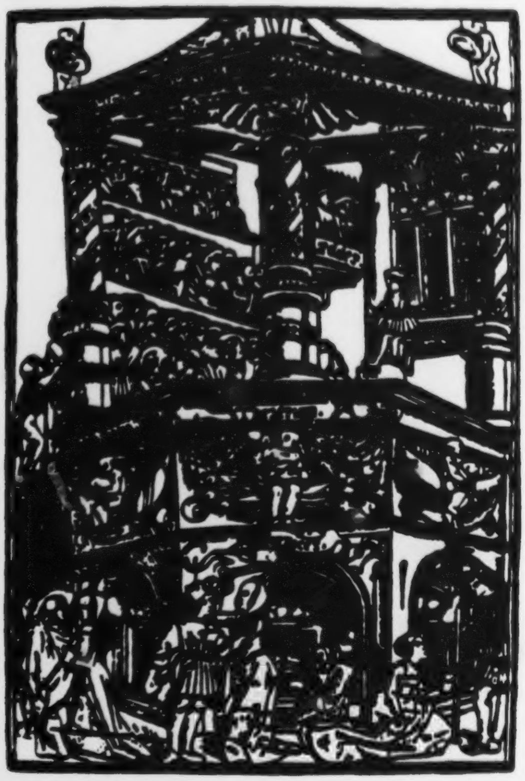


FIGURE 6.4 The theatre as depicted in the edition of Terence's plays printed at Lyons in 1493. Note its several sides, galleries, and the label "Theatrum." This edition was a possible source for Burbage's The Theatre (1576).

Burbage's success prompted others to follow his example. At least nine public playhouses, not counting remodelings and reconstructions, were built before 1642: The Theatre (1576–1597), The Curtain (1577–c. 1627), Newington Butts (c. 1579–c. 1599), The Rose (1587–c. 1606), The Swan (c. 1595–c. 1632), The Globe (1599–1613, 1614–1644), The Fortune (1600–1621, 1621–1661), The Red Bull (1605–1663), and The Hope (1613–1617). All were built outside the city limits, either in the northern suburbs or on the south bank of the Thames River. All but one was constructed between 1576 and 1605, and thus they predate the crown's assumption of the right to specify playing places for troupes and the adult companies' practice of acquiring "private" theatres. After 1610 they came to be used principally as summer houses, secondary in importance to the private theatres used during the winter months. The most important of the public theatres were The Theatre and The Globe (because of their use by Shakespeare's company), and The Rose and The Fortune (operated by Edward Alleyn and Philip Henslowe).

Undoubtedly The Globe and The Fortune marked a considerable advance in design over The Theatre and The Rose. Some scholars have argued that all theatres prior to The Globe were multi-purpose structures with removable stages, because the theatre was too precarious a venture to justify buildings not easily adaptable to other uses. They suggest that The Globe, with its permanent stage, established the pattern adopted by subsequent theatres. Although it is impossible to verify that such a change occurred, it does seem likely that the public theatres were not uniform in design. Nevertheless, it is helpful to describe, insofar as possible, the typical features of the public playhouses.

Although the theatres varied in shape (circular, octagonal, square), the purpose was unvaried: to surround a playing area in such a way as to accommodate a large number of paying spectators. Most theatres had three roofed galleries, one above the other, surrounding the yard. At least some parts of one gallery were divided into private boxes or "lords' rooms." The other galleries, equipped with benches for seats, were undivided. The galleries encircled a large open area, or "yard," which was probably paved and may have sloped toward the stage to aid viewing.

The overall size of buildings varied. Nevertheless, the dimensions of only one theatre, The Fortune, are known. It was 80 feet square on the outside, and the yard was 55 feet square. Since the stage extended well into the yard in all theatres, no spectator was far removed from the performers. At The Fortune the stage was 27½ feet deep by 43 feet wide. This would have left an additional 27½ feet in front of the platform but only 6 feet on either side for spectators standing in the yard. The size and shape of the stage may have differed in other theatres, especially in those that were round or octagonal, but it is usually assumed that the platform jutted well into the yard and was viewed from three sides. A few scholars have argued that the galleries extended completely around the structure and that the action, therefore, was seen from four sides. The stage was raised 4 to 6 feet to improve the view for standing spectators and to provide understage space for trapdoors and special effects.

The stage in most, perhaps all, theatres was sheltered by a roof, commonly called "the shadow" or "the heavens," which served two purposes: to protect the stage from the weather and to house machinery and special effects. From it, thrones and other properties were lowered, and within its attic space such sound effects as thunder, alarum bells, and cannonades were operated. In some instances, the sky, sun, moon, and signs of the zodiac were painted on the underside of the "heavens." In most theatres the stage roof was supported by two posts which rose from the front of the platform, but at The Hope the "heavens" were cantilevered so that the stage could be removed.

The rear of the stage was bounded by a multileveled facade. On the stage level, two large doors served as entrances and as passageways through which heavy properties and set pieces could be moved. These doors were probably the most essential part of the background because of their frequent and varied use. Changes of place were often indicated by the exit of characters through one door, followed by the entrance of others through the second. Usually the doors remained unlocalized, but at times they were used to represent houses, gates, castles, or other structures.

There was also a space for discoveries on the stage level. Most scholars have argued that the "discovery space" was located between the two doors at the rear of the stage. J. C. Adams calls the area the "inner below" or "study" and treats it as something like a miniature proscenium stage with a front curtain. He argues that it was used for staging interior scenes and that heavy properties were placed there and then revealed by drawing the curtain. Adams' view has been challenged by C. Walter Hodges and others. Hodges believes that the rear stage was a "pavilion" and that it jutted forward rather than receding into the facade. He argues that Adams' inner stage would be impractical because of its restricted sightlines whereas a pavilion would be open to view from three sides. George Reynolds has suggested that the discovery space may have been raised slightly above the main stage and connected to it by one or more steps. He proposes this arrangement because of those scripts in which characters must go from one level to another in full view of the audience, even though the theatre seems to have had no permanent visible stairway that connected the second level with the main stage.

Scholars also disagree about the permanency of the discovery space. Adams makes it an architectural feature of the building, while Hodges depicts it as removable. The latter theory has been adopted in part because the only surviving picture of a public theatre, a sketch made of The Swan in 1596, shows a blank space between the two doors of the facade. Furthermore, Reynolds insists that some plays require additional discovery spaces, and he suggests that in these instances structures similar to medieval mansions were erected on the stage itself. Richard Hosley has sought to reconcile all of the conflicting theories by arguing that the Swan drawing is correct in showing no separate discovery space because the area immediately behind each door could serve this function. Thus, he synthesizes many older views by suggesting that discoveries were made within permanent architectural units, that two simultaneous discovery spaces were always available, and that when no discovery space was needed it was "removable" (in the sense that the doors then reverted to conventionalized exits and entrances).

Another controversy centers around the use of the discovery space. Adams argues that numerous scenes were performed within it and that most large properties were set up there while the curtains were drawn to conceal its interior. Other scholars believe that the discovery space was used only to establish locale and that virtually all action took place on the main stage. According to this view, the discovery space would need only be large enough to conceal such articles as a bed or table and chairs. Reynolds and Bernard Beckerman have shown that most properties were carried onto the stage in full view of the audience. They also argue that the discovery space was seldom used.

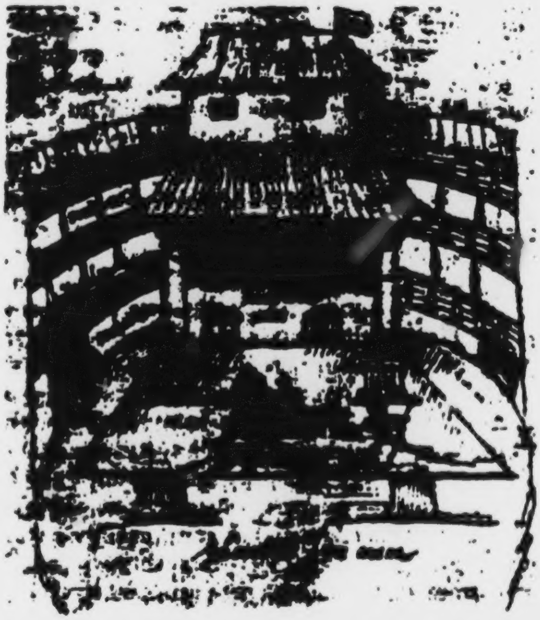


FIGURE 6.5 Interior view of The Swan theatre as it appeared in 1596. The original drawing, made by a Dutch visitor, Johannes de Witt, has not survived; this is a copy made of it by Arend van Buchell. Note the absence of any "discovery space" between the doors at the rear of the main platform; note also the second level of the facade. [From Bapst, *Essai sur l'Histoire du Theatre* (1893)]

Thus, historians agree that there was a discovery space in the public theatres but they disagree about its location, size, and use. The available evidence is insufficient to settle the controversy, although current opinion leans more toward Reynolds, Beckerman, and Hosley than toward Adams.

Similar arguments revolve around the second level of the stage facade. Almost all scholars agree that some type of acting space was located immediately above the stage doors. This space supposedly could be used to represent windows, balconies, battlements, or other high places. There is considerably less agreement, however, about the other features of this second level. Adams places a large bay window above each of the stage doors and between them a narrow railed area (the terrace or "tarras") backed by a curtained alcove (the "inner above") which corresponds to the inner below immediately beneath it. On the other hand, Hodges argues that the top of the removable pavilion (used when a discovery space was needed on the main level) served as a playing area. The drawing of The Swan merely shows what appears to be an open gallery on the second level.

Most historians agree that the second level was sometimes used as a playing area (as, for example, in the balcony scene of *Romeo and Juliet*). But they disagree about the number and kinds of scenes played there. One major theory about Elizabethan staging proposes a repetitive pattern in which the main stage, rear stage, and upper stage were used in orderly succession. Contrary theories hold that practically all scenes were played on the main stage and that other areas were rarely used. Leslie Hotson argues that the second level normally was employed to seat spectators. In each instance, the scholar's view about how the space was used dictates his attempts to reconstruct it, since he must make it sufficiently large in size and endow it with the facilities needed to accommodate the uses he proposes for it.

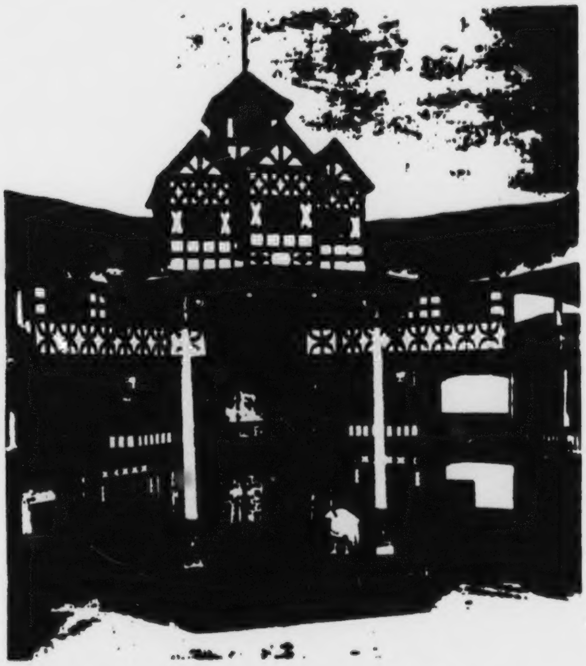


FIGURE 6.6 J. C. Adams' reconstruction of The Globe theatre. Note the inner stages on both the first and second levels and the "musicians' gallery" on the third level. Courtesy Folger Library and Mr. Adams]

The stage facade may also have had a third level, although evidence to verify this is sketchy. Those who accept it usually call it the "musicians' gallery" because of its supposed primary use. If it existed, it may have been used occasionally by actors in scenes representing very high places.

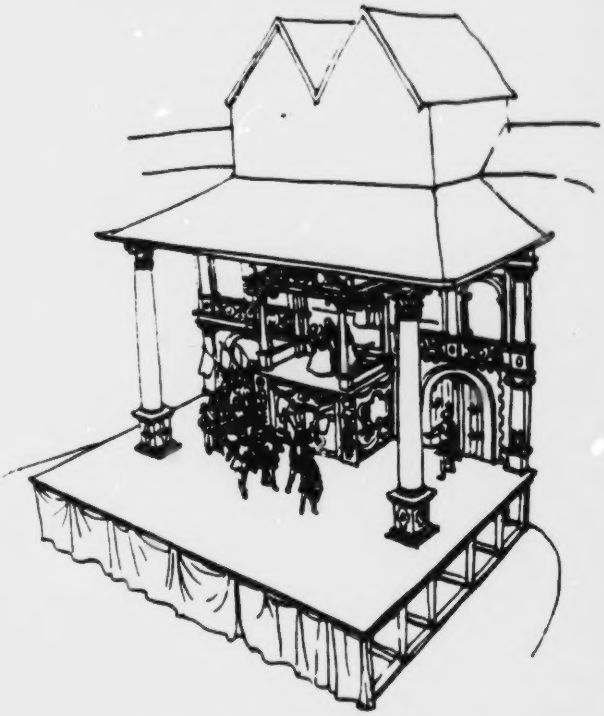


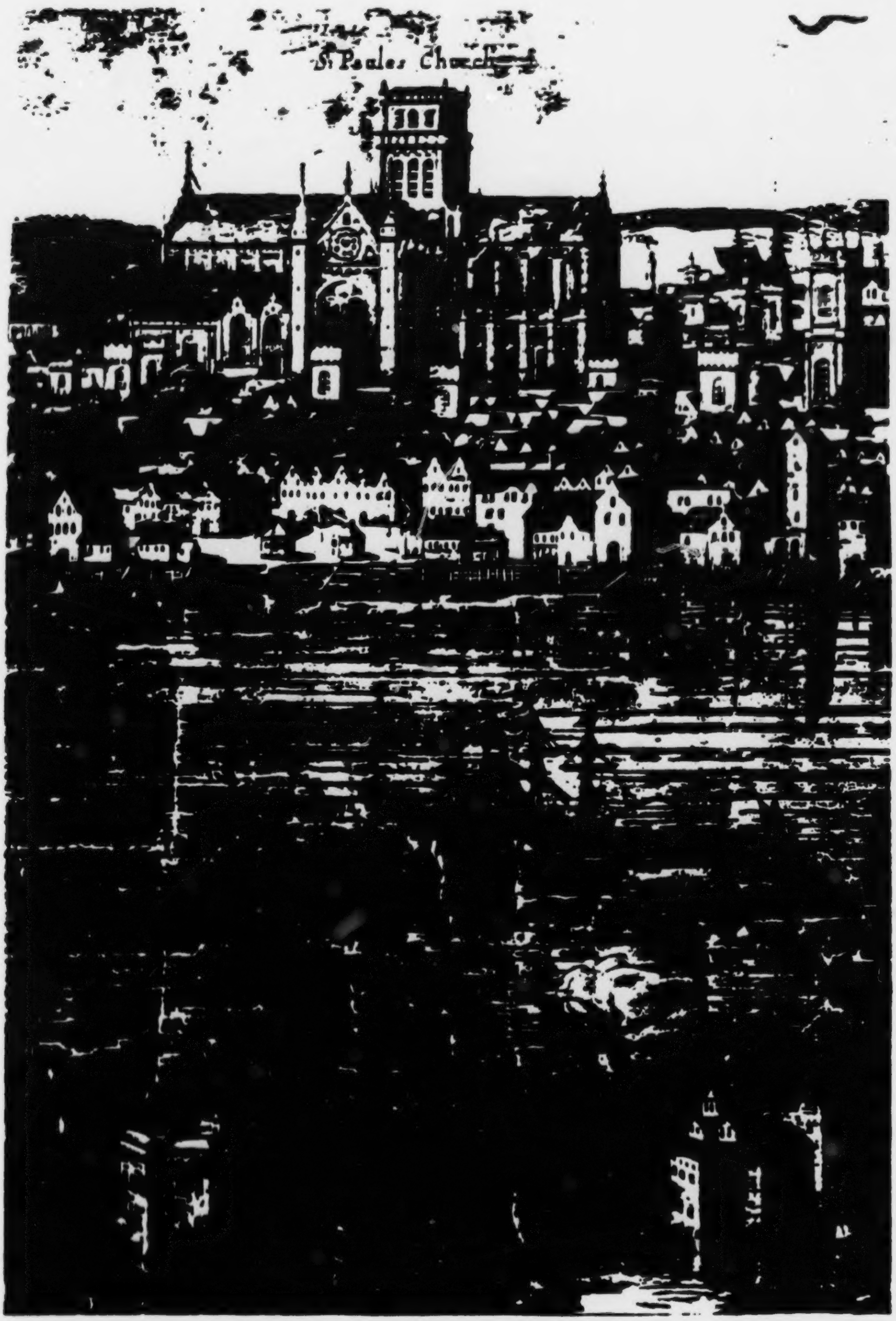
FIGURE 6.7 C. W. Hodges' reconstruction of the Elizabethan stage showing a pavilion at the rear. [From Hodges, *The Globe Restored*. Courtesy of Mr. Hodges]

Historians have paid little attention to the backstage space (or "tiring house") of the public theatre. Some reconstructions show this area as little more than a corridor, and virtually none make adequate allowances for storing the wardrobe, furniture, properties, and other equipment. Some companies owned adjoining structures which may have been used for storage and as dressing rooms. In general, however, we know little about the space used for preparing and maintaining productions.

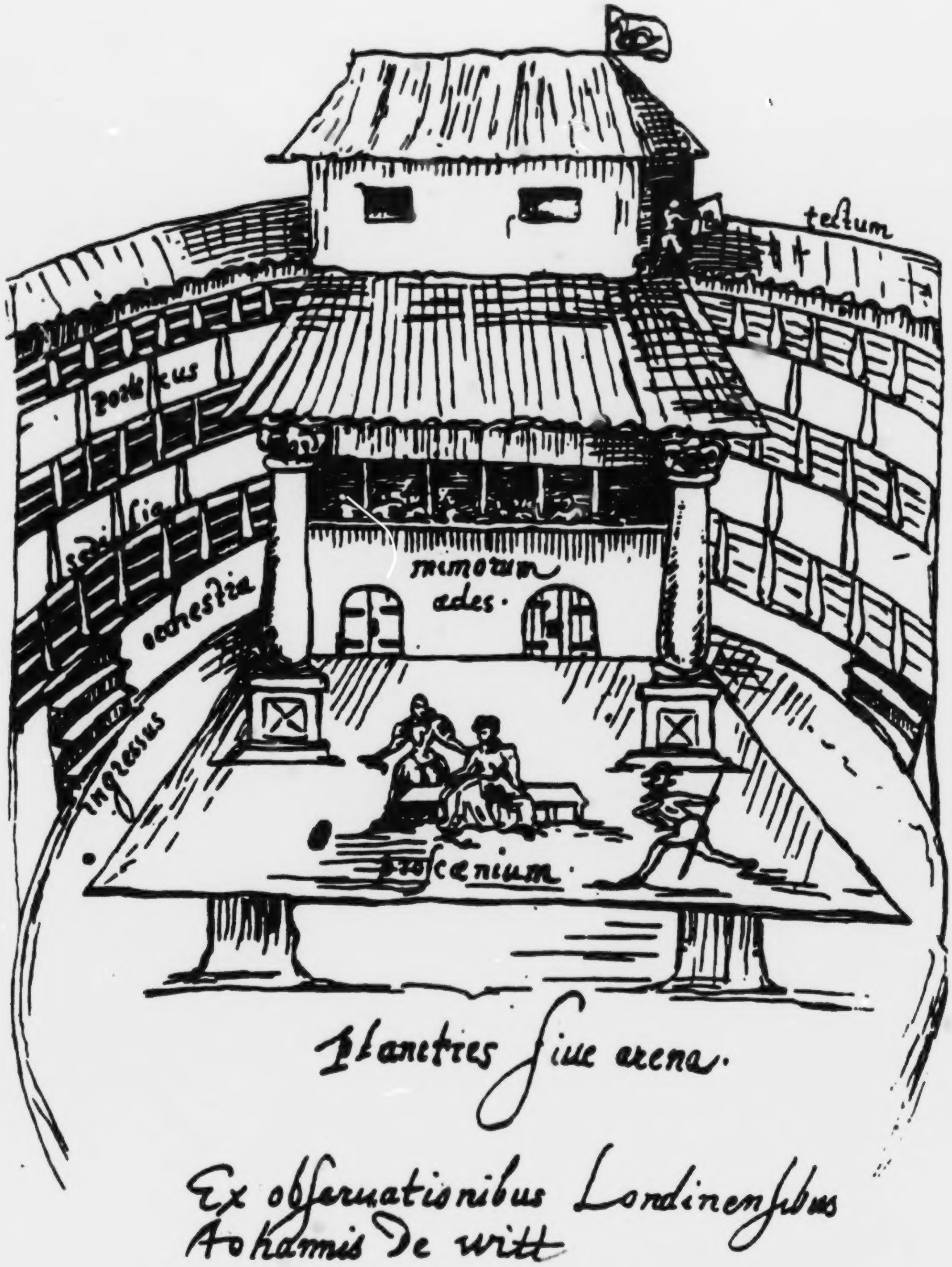
Typically, modern scholars have depicted the public theatres as somewhat crude, half-timbered structures, although contemporary accounts speak of them as costly and sumptuous. DeWitt, describing The Swan in 1596, reports that the columns supporting the stage roof were painted to simulate marble. It seems likely that the theatres became more elaborate as the troupes became more prosperous. We would also do well to remember that the later descriptions of Elizabethan theatres as crude were written by admirers of the Italianate stage, to whom the disregard of illusionism seemed clear evidence of naiveté and simplicity.

Since few of the acting companies had sufficient capital to build their own theatres, most borrowed money to do so or rented theatres from those who had built them as a form of speculation. When Burbage built The Theatre, he borrowed money from John Brayne, a grocer who had earlier invested in a playhouse at the Red Lion Inn. Other speculators included Francis Langley, builder of The Swan, and Aaron Holland, chief investor in The Red Bull. Most important and successful of all, however, was Philip Henslowe, builder of The Rose, The Fortune, and The Hope. Henslowe not only built theatres, but often loaned money to the companies who played in them, and his surviving records of financial transactions contain our principal evidence about the operation of Elizabethan theatres. The pattern of ownership began to change in 1598, however, when the Burbages made Shakespeare and four other actors part owners of The Globe. The success of this arrangement led to its adoption at The Curtain, The Fortune, The Red Bull, and at some private theatres.

The owners, or "householders," were responsible for the upkeep of the building, payment of the rent on the land occupied by the building, and the salaries of the men who collected entrance fees. Although arrangements may have varied from one theatre to another, The Globe's division of receipts is usually taken as typical: the actors received all money collected for admission to the yard, while fees for entering the galleries were divided equally between the actors and the householders. Additional income was derived from renting the theatre to amateur actors, fencers, tumblers, and miscellaneous entertainers and from the sale of various articles in the auditorium during performances. A major source of revenue for most theatres was a taphouse which dispensed beer, ale, and wine. The householders, and sometimes the actors, shared this additional income.



*ABOVE:* A section of the panorama of Thamesside London published by J. C. Visscher in 1616. In the foreground (the south bank of the river) both the Globe Theatre (probably the second of that name erected in 1614) and the Bear Garden are seen.


tectum
porticus
sedilia
orchestra
ingressus
mimorum ædes
proscenium
Planities sive arena.
Ex obseruationibus Londinensibus
Johannis De witt

*ABOVE:* The interior of the Swan Theatre. This sketch was app y copied from a rough drawing in a letter dated 1596 sent from London by the noted Dutch traveller, Jo es de Witt. The galleries are remarkably similar to those of the George Inn, Southwark, the only survivi galleried inn in London. Inns with a square yard enclosed by upper galleries on to which bedchambers opened provided a convenient "theatre" for wandering troupes playing one day stands. The stage would be improvised at one end, the audience being accommodated in the galleries.

Diane Hudson
Master Works Study of Shakespeare
Lesson Plan
***Merchant of Venice***

**Rationale**

- To give students an opportunity to explore, understand, and relate to some of the motifs found in the first act of the play.

**Target Class**

- Sophomore English class, college-bound students of various cultural backgrounds from a middle class suburban community most of whom have been introduced to Shakespeare and Elizabethan drama through an intensive study of *Romeo and Juliet* in their Freshman English class.

**Purpose**

- Students will consider several of the motifs presented in the first act of *Merchant of Venice*: Act I-money/love,
  Act II-choices,
  Act III-revenge, Christian/Jew
- Students will have an opportunity to "try on" the ideas/values presented in Act I using a contemporary point of view.

**The Plan**

**Activity**

- Arrange the class in three groups.
- Give each group one "situation."

**Situation #1**: You loan money to a really close friend; the friend loses/squanders the money and can't return it. The friend asks for more money to date his/her latest heart-throb. How would you respond? How would you feel/act/react if you were the close friend?

**Situation #2**: You want to marry a wildly wealthy girl/guy. However, her/his father on his death bed, fearful of all the gold-diggers he knows will pursue your beloved in marriage, leaves her/him with this legacy: the marriage partner will be the person who picks the correct box of three--one gold, one silver, one lead. How will you determine which box will win your love? How would you feel/act/react if you were the wildly wealthy girl/guy?

**Situation #3**: You don't mind lending money (you have plenty of it), but you philosophically believe people should pay you interest for the loan. Tony, a neighbor, thinks you're a louse for profiting from your loans; he never charges anyone interest. Tony's interest-free loans bring down the amount of interest you can charge and this makes you angry. In addition, Tony has called you names and even spit on your clothes. Now Tony is out of cash and wants to borrow money from you. How will you get your revenge? If you were Tony, what would you offer to get the loan you so desperately want?

**Situation #3A**: Oh, another factor to consider: you and Tony practice different religions. What does this information do to alter your responses?

- Brainstorm responses to questions in group.
- Groups break into pairs to improvise scenes in front of class. Give students time establish which character they will play. Remind students to let their instincts determine what they say.
- Present improvisations.
- Students record responses to each presentation.
- Class discusses presentations of motifs.

**Assignment**: Read *MOV I*

**Evaluative process**: Observation of student participation and enthusiasm.

MASTERWORKS PROGRAM in SHAKESPEARE

Janet Levine

March 16 1993

# ONE DAY LESSON PLAN
# MIDSUMMER'S NIGHT DREAM

## A. STUDENT PROFILE

Freshman class of 12 students in a high energy, highly academic independent prep school; equal gender numbers. Students come from diverse socio-economic backgrounds and from all over the country, yet others are from Europe, the Far East; Hong Kong, Korea, Japan. They are a racially diverse group. There are both boarders and day students. Students are bright, articulate, with good to excellent writing skills. They are aware, eager, easily challenged.

## B. PHILOSOPHY OF UNIT/LESSON

The rationale for the UNIT is to try to spark in the students an understanding of the possible creative process behind the MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM (MND) and to give the students a sense of confidence in and understanding of their own creative processes.

## C. GOALS OF UNIT/LESSON

The goal of the UNIT is to engender in the students an appreciation of the intricate manner in which the MND is constructed and to show how the thematic material (in this case "dreams") anchors the different elements. An ancillary goal is to challenge the students with a fairly complex writing assignment. In doing this unit Shakespeare's use of language is highlighted and also his (and their) imaginative powers.

## D. DETAILS

This lesson takes place about three weeks into the unit. By now the students will have read the play aloud in class. We will have had class discussions on the text, as well as around the common notions of drama - plot, character, time, place, language, as they pertain to the MND.

The homework assignments over this period (four half-hour sessions) have been to record in a DREAM JOURNAL twelve dreams they have had over the three weeks. The journals have been turned in every week. This way the students are able to select from among many dreams they have had during this time.

Students at this level are really turned on to dreams. One can introduce successfully the powerful notion of the subconscious mind with which we are actively engaged as we sleep. There is high excitement in class each day as students spontaneously describe their difficulties in transcribing their dreams. They help each other with techniques (and I add my own methodology.)

This is the lesson when I draw together their dream work and one possible way in which Shakespeare created this play. We have discussed at length the three separate strands of the play - the night world, the lovers and the Athenian world of Theseus, the world of the 'rude mechanicals'. We have looked closely at Shakespeare's use of plot device - Hermia and Lysanders' elopement, Puck, magic potions, so on - as well as imagaic and language patterns which occur and re-occur in all three worlds - the most obvious being the use of dreams and dream imagery.

I suggest that Shakespeare started writing the play after he himself had a dream, a dream of a midsummer's night in which deeply archetypal characters which he called Oberon, Titania, Puck, (roughly corresponding according to Jungian theory to the Magician, the Sage, the Fool) emerge from the forest (the subconscious) to tease and haunt him. (See note on the archetypes.)

Shakespeare felt so compelled by his dream and by the way the dream elements interacted with his conscious mind that he used exactly that material to write the play. He took his dream world and created around it a unity of plot, characters, time, place and language.

The key assignment - for which I give them a week of class time as well as homework time - with two scheduled individual conferences with me over this period, is as follows. They are to choose one dream from their journal. Using that dream they must write a short story (600-800 words) creating other characters, situations, so on, to create a plausible story.

I have attempted this assignment several times now. Each time I am amazed at the breadth and depth of the students' final creative pieces, how easily they follow the intent of the assignment. They are also deeply appreciative of Shakespeare's creative genius.

NOTE ON ARCHETYPES. I do spend a little time on Jung and his theory of the archetypes during this lesson. A brief description:-

(Oberon) Magicians create new realities, transform old ones, serve as catalysts for change, they "name" and therefore create reality.

(Titania) Sages find freedom through understanding the big picture (global or cosmic.) Sages combine detachment with love, wisdom, joy in life.

(Puck) Fools find freedom through unconventionality and a capacity to enjoy every moment. Fools find clever, innovative and fun ways around obstacles - intellectual or physical. They live fully every moment.

# THE USE OF RHETORIC IN HAMLET:

## A LOOK AT HOW CLAUDIUS CONTROLS SITUATIONS THROUGH LANGUAGE

**Master Works Institute in Shakespeare**

Mary Colvario
Boston Latin School
March 16, 1993

# THE USE OF RHETORIC IN HAMLET:
# A LOOK AT HOW CLAUDIUS CONTROLS SITUATIONS THROUGH LANGUAGE

**Philosophy/rationale for the lesson.** One of the many reasons that the study of Shakespeare's Hamlet can be useful to high school students is there are many instances in the play where characters use language expertly. By analyzing speeches, specifically those of Claudius, students can be made aware of how we are affected by the speeches of the various characters, how characters reveal themselves through their words, and how they themselves can use language to their own benefit.

**Description of the students to whom this lesson will be taught.** Although many eleventh and twelfth grade students can benefit from such a lesson, the questions and format of this lesson are directed to academically talented eleventh graders who have already read several plays by Shakespeare and who feel relatively comfortable with Shakespearean language.

**Goals/purpose of the unit.** The goals/purposes of the unit are several:

* Students will read several speeches by Claudius, analyzing such rhetorical and stylistic devices as organization, diction, and figurative language.
* Students will note Claudius' awareness of his audience.
* Students will determine his motives and strategies.
* Students will identify the types of appeals used by Claudius to attain his goals.
* Students will see how Claudius reveals himself not only in what he says but how he says it.

**Details of the lesson plan.**

For homework, have students read the first two scenes of Act I of Hamlet, asking them to note in their reading logs how both Hamlet and Claudius, the "mighty opposites," are presented. Most students usually concentrate on Hamlet, commenting on his mumbled asides, his double meanings, his reticence, his sorrow over his father's death, his disgust with his mother's recent marriage, and his reaction to Horatio's news about the appearance of his father's ghost.

Surprise your students by first turning your attention to Claudius to see how he is presented by Shakespeare. Concentrate how his character is revealed as well as how he presents himself in what we assume is his first public court appearance since the wedding.

Before reading aloud his speeches in scene ii, ask students to surmise what the court of Denmark would be thinking at this particular time. Answers will be various, e.g., Why did Claudius and Gertrude marry so soon after the king's death? How did Claudius get away with assuming the throne? Isn't their relationship incestuous? How does Hamlet feel about his mother's overly hasty marriage? How does the rest of the Danish court feel about this turn of events? What sort of relationship exists between Hamlet and Claudius?

After the students decide the kinds of questions and concerns alive in the Danish court, ask them to assume they are in that court and to react to Claudius' first speech. Following is the text of his speeches, divided into manageable parts with appropriate questions and some of the possible answers for each division.

> Though yet of Hamlet **our dear brother**'s death
> The memory be green, and that it us befitted
> To bear our hearts in grief, and our whole kingdom
> To be contracted in one brow of woe,
> Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature
> That we with **wisest sorrow** think on him
> Together with remembrance of ourselves.
> Therefore **our sometimes sister, now our queen**,
> The imperial jointress to this **warlike state**,
> Have we, as 'twere with a defeated joy,
> With an auspcious, and a dropping eye,
> With mirth in funeral, and with dirge in marriage,
> In equal scale weighing delight and dole,
> Taken to wife.

What are Claudius' concerns here? (to address and to alleviate any criticism that might exist about his marriage to Gertrude)

What advantage is there in his immediately mentioning the peculiar circumstances of his marriage? (Since the circumstances of the marriage would definitely be controversial, it makes sense for him quickly to address the situation. He must establish himself as the person in charge, the person who controls the court. To ignore the marriage would be unwise; not speaking of it would suggest he is uncomfortable with what he has done.)

What words are particularly well suited for Claudius' purpose to eliminate any criticism that might exist about his actions? (Consider the use of "wisest sorrow," certainly better than simple sorrow since it suggests wisdom in Claudius's actions; consider "warlike state," reminding the court that Denmark is facing problems from outside forces, certainly no time to appear weak and indecisive; consider the use of repeated constrasts, almost like a pair of scales that balance two equally important ideas, consider also the structure of Claudius' lines, the structure of logical argument, i.e., "Though yet. . .yet. . .Therefore. . .")

***************

> . . .nor have we herein barred
> Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone
> With this affair along. For all, our thanks.

What is Claudius hoping to accomplish with these three lines? (to suggest that the rest of the Danish court was consulted before the wedding took place; to remind them that now that the marriage is a *fait accompli* it is no longer a topic of debate or controversy; and to involve the entire court as accomplices in the marriage through his expression of gratitude)

***************

> Now follow, that you know, young Fortinbras,
> Holding **a weak supposal of our worth**,
> Or thinking by **our late dear brother**'s death
> **Our state to be disjoint and out of frame**,
> Colleagued with this dream of **his advantage**,
> He hath not failed to pester us with message
> Importing the surrender of those lands

Lost by his father, with all bands of law,
To **our most valiant brother**. So much for him.

Now that marriage to Gertrude is recognized, to what topic does Claudius turn his attention? (to the safety of his kingdom, certainly an appropriate priority)

What is Claudius' motive in reviewing the current situation that exists between Denmark and Norway? (Once again he wants to emphasize the dangerous situation that could arise if Denmark lacked a strong ruler. Young Fortinbras is keen to gain back the lands lost by his father to King Hamlet. Claudius realizes that security, peace, and safety are important issues to the Danish court. He also realizes how important it is for him to establish himself as a worthy successor to his brother who actually won those lands from old Fortinbras.)

When Claudius mentions his dead brother here and earlier, what words does he use of describe him? Why? (Note the appearance of loving regard in his choice of words: "our dear brother," "our late dear brother," "our most valiant brother." One could suppose that Claudius wants there to be no suggestion that anything but love and respect existed between the two men. Indeed he has sullied this brother's memory by engaging in an incestuous relationship with Gertrude, but he's trying to recreate the actual situation to seem less distasteful when he constantly invokes his "dear brother.")

***************

Now for ourself and for this time of meeting.
Thus much the business is: we have here writ
To Norway, uncle of young Fortinbras,
Who, **impotent and bedrid,** scarcely hears
Of this his nephew's purpose, to suppress
His further gait herein, in that the levies,
The lists, and full proportions are all made
Out of his subject, and we here dispatch
You, good Cornelius, and you, Voltemand,
For bearers of this greeting to old Norway,

**Giving to you no further personal power**
**To business with the King, more than the scope**
**Of these dilated allow.**
Farewell, and let your haste commend your duty. . .

What is Claudius' intent here? (There are several purposes of these lines: (1) Claudius wants to be seen as a competent ruler who takes charge of the current situation and who knows how to handle any potential trouble; (2) he wants to highlight that the King of Norway is "impotent and bedrid," suggesting that Denmark should be delighted that he, their king, is powerful, active, and in control, and (3) he wants to ensure that Voltemand and Cornelius know their powers are limited to what he chooses to give them because he, after all, is now the source of power in Denmark.)

***************

And now, Laertes, what's the news with you?
You told us of some suit. What is't, Laertes?
You cannot speak of reason to the Dane
And lose your voice. What wouldst thou beg, Laertes,
That shall not be my offer, not thy asking?
**The head is not more native to the heart,**
**The hand more instrumental to the mouth,**
**Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father.**
That wouldst thou have, Laertes?

How is this passage different from the earlier ones? (Certainly its tone is far less formal, more bantering, less serious. Up until these lines, Claudius asks no questions, employing in the earlier pronouncements only declarative sentences and imperative commands. Obviously, he feels he has suitably addressed the more serious matters and now is free to turn his attention to less compelling matters. He shows both affability and relaxed familiarity.)

What do we learn about Claudius' relationship with Polonius, Laertes' father, through these lines? (Through the metaphorical language used by Claudius, we come to see that Polonius was instrumental in Claudius' being named king. Also with his almost effusive compliment, Claudius shows to the entire court the advantages of supporting him: position, praise, respect, public recognition.)

**************

*Laertes.* My dread lord,
Your leave and favor to return to France,
From whence though willingly I came to Denmark
To show my duty in your coronation,
Yet now I must confess, that duty done,
My thoughts and wishes bend again toward France
And bow them to your gracious leave and pardon.

*King.* Have you your father's leave? What says Polonius?

*Polonius.* He hath, my lord, wrung from me my slow leave
By laborsome petition, and at last
Upon his will I sealed my hard consent.
I do beseech you give him leave to go.

*King.* Take thy fair hour, Laertes. Time be thine,
And thy best graces spend it at they will!

How would you characterize this brief question and answer period? (The king's tone continues to be friendly, magnanimous, almost jocular. After Laertes has been formally polite in his request and after Claudius has perfunctorily consulted Polonius, Claudius sends Laertes happily on his way.)

****************

*King.* But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son--

*Hamlet.* [Aside] A little more than kin, and less than kind!

*King.* How is it that the clouds still hang on you?

*Hamlet.* Not so, my lord. I am too much in the sun.

*Queen.* Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted color off,

And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.
Do not forever with thy vailed lids
Seek for thy noble father in the dust.
Thou know'st 'tis common; all that lives must die,
Passing through nature to eternity.

*Hamlet.* Ay, madam, it is common.

*Queen.* If it be,
Why seems it so particular with thee?

*Hamlet.* Seems, Madam? Nay, it is. I know not "seems."
'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,
Nor customary suits of solemn black,
Nor windy suspiration of forced breath,
No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,
Nor the dejected havior of the visage,
Together with all forms, moods, shapes of grief,
That can denote me truly. These indeed seem,
For they are actions that a man might play,
But I have that within which passes show;
These but the trappings and the suits of woe.

How does Claudius' participation change in this passage? (After addressing Hamlet and asking only one brief question, he remains silent. Knowing that this conversation will not be an easy one, he initially defers to Gertrude. Rather than risk Hamlet's public ire, he prefers that Gertrude momentarily be the target of Hamlet's anger. This strategy gives him time to alter his manner as he prepares his next assault.)

Ask students to imagine how Claudius acts during the interchange between Hamlet and Gertrude. (Responses will vary, but one supposes that Claudius would like to retain the aura of controlled dignity and kingly authority.)

***************

*King*: 'Tis **sweet and commendable** in your nature, Hamlet,
To give these morning duties to your father,
But you must know your father lost a father,
That father lost, lost his, and the survivor bound
In filial obligation for some term
To do obsequious sorrow. But to persever
In **obstinate** condolement is a course
Of **impious stubbornness**. 'Tis **unmanly grief**.
It shows **a will most incorrect to heaven,**
**A heart unfortified, a mind impatient,**
**An understanding simple and unschooled**,
For what we know must be and is as common
As any the most vulgar thing to sense,
Why should we in our **peevish opposition**
Take it to heart? Fie, 'tis **a fault to heaven**,
**A fault against the dead**, **a fault to nature**,
**To reason most absurd**, whose common theme
Is death of fathers, and who still hath cried,
From the first corse till he that died today,
"This must be so."

How would you characterize this speech? (We can easily see that Claudius has not been idle during Gertrude's plea and Hamlet's subsequent diatribe; instead he has prepared a careful strategy to offset Hamlet's morose disdain. After all, no one wants a gloomy child to get the better of his elders, particularly if that surliness could be potentially troublesome.)

How does Claudius's diction work to his favor? (In his first words, he seems to acknowledge that Hamlet's mourning is an acceptable mode of behavior: "'Tis sweet and commendable"; however, even here there may be the slight insinuation of weakness or effeminacy. Yet however we interpret this opening line, students have no trouble in listing the insulting labels that follow: "obstinate," "impious stubbornness," "unmanly grief," "a will most incorrect to heaven," a "heart unfortified, a mind impatient," an "understanding simple and unschooled," "peevish opposition," "a fault to heaven," a "fault against the dead, a fault to nature." In a single, sustained attack, Claudius demeans Hamlet's intelligence, manliness, education, character, morality, and humanity.

It immediately becomes evident that, after his brief respite during Hamlet and Gertrude's conversation, Claudius has garnered the strength to confront Hamlet's opposition.)

****************

We pray you throw to earth
This unprevailing woe, and think of us
As of a father, for **let the world take note**
**You are the most immediate to our throne**,
And with no less nobility of love
Than that which dearest father bears his son
Do I impart toward you.

What change is seen in these words? (Just before Claudius had been belittling Hamlet, using many words with negative connotations; now he changes his tack to appeal to Hamlet's ambitions and sense of self worth. Claudius knows the importance of using a variety of appeals, rational as well as emotional. If the emotional appeals associated with character aren't working, perhaps more pragmatic promises will prove useful.)

****************

*Claudius.* For your intent
In going back to school in Wittenberg,
It is most retrograde to our desire,
And we beseech you, bend you to remain
Here in the cheer and comfort of our eye,
**Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son**.

*Queen.* Let not thy mother lose her prayers, Hamlet.
I pray thee stay with us, go not to Wittenberg.

*Hamlet.* I shall in all my best obey you, madam.

*King.* Why, **'tis a loving and a fair reply**.
Be as outself in Denmark. Madam, come.
**This gentle and unforced accord of Hamlet**
**Sits smiling to my heart**, in grace whereof
No jocund health that Denmark drinks today,

> But the great cannon to the clouds shall tell,
> And the King's rouse, the heaven shall bruit again,
> Respeaking earthly thunder. **Come away**.
> *Flourish. Exeunt all but Hamlet.*

How does Claudius choose to end this public court appearance? (by getting Hamlet to agree to remain in Denmark, under "the cheer and comfort of [his] eye." Certainly, we soon know that there are practical reasons why Claudius wants to monitor Hamlet's actions. But one can also see how important it would be for Claudius to establish his paternal interest in his cousin/son in a public setting. The more quickly he can establish a bond between him and Hamlet, the better he will appear in the Danish court.)

Is there anything startling about Claudius' response to Hamlet's promise to his mother that he will remain in Denmark? (Yes, when Claudius remarks that "'tis a loving and a fair reply," we grimace a bit and wonder how the Danish court would react to his odd appraisal of Hamlet's terse "I shall in all my best obey you, madam." We wonder further how Claudius thinks he can forward the questionable claim that "This gentle and unforced accord of Hamlet/Sits smiling to my heart." But then we remember that Claudius is an expert manipulator, one who uses language to his own benefit. He is well aware that one who defines a situation, particularly one who has authority, is often the one who establishes the official version of truth.)

How might a member of the Danish court evaluate this final conversation among Hamlet, Gertrude, and Claudius? (Although it would be impossible to forget entirely the circumstances surrounding Claudius and Gertrude's marriage or Hamlet's earlier gloom, one could easily concede that Claudius was able to ameliorate any real difficulties that might exist. Certainly, the new king announced to everyone that he was entirely satisfied with Hamlet's response, which he called "a loving and a fair reply." Now as he goes off to celebrate, Claudius is enveloped in an aura of imperial authority confident that he has used language to secure more firmly his newly gained throne.)

*****************

**Evaluation.** By taking the time early in the play to examine and discuss the powers of rhetoric, students will better enjoy their reading of Hamlet. Their discussion of later scenes will be more astute, particularly in Act II, scene ii when Claudius is engaging the questionable talents of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern and in Act IV, scenes v and vii when Claudius so expertly manipulates the potentially dangerous Laertes. In these later discussions, the students' added awareness of the power of language should be evident. They will note not only what is said but also the intent of any utterance through an appraisal of situation, audience, and the speaker's use of various rhetorical and stylistic devices.

SHAKESPEARE MASTER WORKS
TWO - THREE DAY LESSON PLAN
MARCH 16, 1993
HOWLAND

1) PHILOSOPHY: The background rationale is to make Shakespeare more accessible, to try to create an enviroment where students can discover what a brilliant dramatist he is. In the more immediate foreground is an additional rationale: to study the characters of HAMLET as models of people who exercise important life skills, namely problem-solving and decision-making.

2) DESCRIPTION OF STUDENTS: Senior AP language and composition students in a private boarding/day college preparatory school with a tremendous range of academic ability; some will be admitted to this course because of ability, others because of drive and enthusiasm.

3) GOALS: Students will--

a) look at Shakespeare as if for the first time regardless of previous biases
b) understand that HAMLET has relevance in their worlds
c) discover that they can read and comprehend Shakespeare
d) listen to and gain an appreciation for Shakespeare as a poet, specifically his imagery, wordplay, and use of metaphors
e) listen to and gain an appreciation for Shakespeare the playwright, specifically his creation of complex characters, relationships, and conflicts
f) understand the play as theatre rather than merely as literature through understanding, among other things, what it might have been like to see the play in 1600, what the stage and stage practices of the day were like, what the people who attended the plays might have been like

4) LESSON PLAN:

Day one

--Ten-minute Freewrite: When you think of Shakespeare or when someone mentions Shakespeare, what comes to mind? What is your history with Shakespeare?

--Rest of period: Students leave class to interview ten people (minimum) about their recollections of and thoughts about Shakespeare. They are encouraged to take notes and to interview a variety of people: peers, teachers, secretaries, administrators, maintenance, and so on.

--Homework: 20 - 30 minute freewrite on what they discovered while interviewing, focusing on what new angles/attitudes they encountered. Read Act I, sc. i.

Day Two

--First ten minutes: Play the fact game. Going around the room (in a circle), students recall one "fact" from the reading with no repeats and no interpretive information, i.e. The play begins on a castle battlement, It's cold, It's at night, There are guards talking, There is a change of the guard, They talk about seeing a ghost, They say the ghost looks like King Hamlet, etc.

--Rest of period: read and discuss results of interviews and freewrites; focus on inconsistencies and controversy.

--Homework: Draft paper on why we should and/or shouldn't read Shakespeare in school.

Day Three

--Brainstorm questions and conflicts that are present in the first scene of HAMLET; discuss answers for the questions (small groups or pairs where notebooks are traded and students write responses to each other).

If time allows:

--Find a stage (space) to play the scene and read aloud; basic blocking/sense of entering/exiting and speaking to other(s); ask students to make some basic decisions on this, to be directors and players. Or, improvise a scene that approximates the action of Act I, sc. i.

--Homework: Mini-research project on Elizabethan Theatre (picture and basic information), a xerox and/or some notes; compare this information with "pictures" of theatre(s) students have been to/productions they've seen; require a brief (2 minute) oral presentation on findings.

5) EVALUATION: Students will be evaluated by a variety of means: papers, oral presentations, improvisation, speech memorization, class discussions, reading quizzes

R.O'Brien
3/16/93

# HAMLET

G. B. Harrison, ed. Shakespeare : The Complete Works. Harcourt, Brace, & World, Inc.: New York, 1968.

Rationale: to enable students to analyze Shakespeare's characterization of Hamlet through a close examination of the form and content of Hamlet's soliloquies.

The lesson is most appropriate for an advanced senior class in a inner-city high school that is racially and ethnically integrated. Therefore the activity is flexible enough to accommodate a class that might be somewhat heterogeneous in both ability and previous experience with Shakespeare.

Objectives: to develop strategies for making inferences
to develop strategies for determining cause and effect
to develop the ability to understand vocabulary used by Shakespeare
to analyze the relationship of form to content
to identify values presented in an excerpt from a play
to develop the abilty to paraphrase the language of Shakespeare
to organize ideas into a coherent analytical essay that is substantiated by specific references to the play

Day One

Have students copy the following quote by Mark Van Doren;

> Hamlet's soliloquies are secret mirrors, the subdued brillance of whose shifting planes reflects that predicament that surrounds him, past and future, as well as present.

Next have one student come to the front of the class (center of circle). Ask the student to read Hamlet's soliloquy in act II, scene 2, lines 575 - 634. Then ask another student to read the same soliloquy but in a different way. Ask for some reaction from the audience.
Continue with a few more interpretations and reactions to them.

Now distribute the following questions as a vehicle for conducting a class discussion on the meaning of the soliloquy. Once the meaning has been clarified, ask students to identify certain ideas from the soliloquy that could be connected to the quote by Mark Van Doren. Finally ask students to substantiate these analytical ideas about Hamlet's character with other examples from the play. Avoid examples taken from other Hamlet soliloquies.

Day Two

Facilitate a class discussion on the soliloquy

Why is the first line of the soliloquy a half-line?
Why does Hamlet refer to himself as a rogue and a slave?
Why would he consider himself a "peasant" slave?
Explain the comparison that Hamlet makes between himself and the player?
Is the comparison complimentary to Hamlet or uncomplimentary?
Is there any significance behind the reference to Hecuba? If so, what is it?
Identify several examples of hyperbole and explain why Shakespeare has Hamlet use these examples?
Why does Hamlet refer to himself as dull and "muddy-mettled"?
What simile does Hamlet use for himself?
What would be Hamlet's "cause"?
Paraphrase the next questions that Hamlet asks himself. Use contemporary language.
Why is the word " Ha!" written by itself?
Identify and analyze the references to animal imagery in the next few lines.
What do we learn about Hamlet through his use of six different adjectives to describe the word "villain"?
Why are the words, " Oh, vengeance!" written in one line?
How does Hamlet define his predicament in lines 611-616?
What is the significance of Hamlet's use of the following words; ass, whore, drab, and scullion?
What is the antecedent of the pronoun in " Fie upon 't!"?
What is Hamlet's plan and what makes him think that the plan will succeed?
Why does Hamlet now refer to the Devil and what does the reference tell us about him?
What two words define Hamlet's self-image?
Is the conclusion of the soliloquy a rationalization?

Day Three

Divide class in thirds.
Assign act I, scene 2, lines 129-159 to one group.
Assign act III, scene 1, lines 56-90 to another group.
Assign act IV, scene 4, lines 32-66 to another group.
Each group must analyze the soliloguy and identify ideas that could be used to verify the quote by Mark Van Doren.

ASSIGNMENT Write an analytical essay in which you verify the quote by Mark Van Doren. You must demonstrate your ability to analyze Hamlet through what he says in the soliloquies and the way he says it. You are allowed to substantiate your analysis of his character with other examples from the play but the soliloquies must be focus of the writing.

# MASTER WORKS OF SHAKESPEARE

## HAMLET

Jackie Hensley
March 16, 1993

I have chosen to use the study of Hamlet for this introductory one-two day lesson. Hamlet has long been one of my favorite works in the Junior curriculum and I would love to have it come alive for my students so they, too, can appreciate its relevance in today's society. Hamlet is timeless for it is about characters who face confusion, disappointment, anger, frustration, revenge as they try to accept and to solve the problems/conflicts in their lives. These characters and their feelings/lives are very much like ours today. The Hamlet of the 1560's is very much alive in the 1990's.

**PHILOSOPHY/RATIONALE**: It is so important to set the scene before reading the play. . .

a. to build an understanding of characters, problems, possible solutions

b. to pique interest by actively involving class

c. to have students see the relevance of the Hamlet of 1500's to 1993.

d. to begin to build connections to their individual lives for life-long learning to take place.

## LEARNERS:

This study of Wm. Shakespeare's Hamlet is designed for a class of twenty-six high school juniors who are in the second honors division in the college tract. These students are essentially motivated learners who have had experience with two other Shakespearean plays (Romeo and Juliet & Julius Caesar). This class is fairly enthusiastic and there are no major behavior problems. It is familiar and comfortable with imagery/relaxation techniques and the inclusion of art in the classroom. These students are academically capable and will be serious candidates for four year colleges and graduate study in the future. The study of Hamlet takes approximately 3-4 weeks to complete. This introductory lesson will take place during a one-two day period.

## INTRODUCTION TO HAMLET:

Begin with quiet time to close their eyes/quiet eyes to reflect about the classes of the day, the tensions/problems at school and then to slowly go into the classes of the future----classes at college. Ask them to picture themselves in college. Ask them to think about which college they would like to attend: the kind of school, location, size, etc. Ask, "Anyone have any ideas about specific colleges you'd like to attend? What programs are you interested in? How about size--large or small? Would you like to be close to home or far away? Have them slowly open their eyes and share some of the pictures/images they saw first in small, non-threatening groups of 3-4 and then with the whole class. Then ask them to imagine with you that a college freshman has been called home from U.C.L.A. by his mother. She is meeting him at Logan Airport.

Make prior arrangements with one of the students in the class to do this role play with you. The teacher will role play the mother and the student will assume the role of the U.C.L.A. freshman. Tell him/her exactly what you tell the class. Through the role play, the class should learn that the young man's name is Hamlet, that his father has just been buried and that his mother had recently married his father's brother Claudius in an attempt to continue the family business without interruption. As the young student asks many relevant questions, the mother (teacher) should attempt to explain very quickly, very casually what has happened and show far more interest in her son's luggage than his questions and concerns about his father's death, the funeral, the marriage, the business, etc.

Stop the role play at this point and ask the class to jot words/phrases to describe individual feelings towards or about Hamlet, Queen Gertrude, his mother or Uncle Claudius. Then share these reactions in small groups of three or four and then have each group select one or two responses to share with the whole class.

For the next step, ask the groups to create metaphors from the words/phrases. (i.e. Hamlet is like...., Hamlet's mother, Queen Gertrude is like....., Uncle Claudius is like.....). Each group will share these and discuss them. Tell the class to keep these individual and group responses for they may want to use them later in their letter writing and/or poetry assignments.

Next distribute a large piece of white drawing paper to each group and colored pencils/magic markers. Encourage the groups to illustrate visually in any color(s), form, image, and in any arrangement, their interpretation of Hamlet, Queen Gertrude, and Claudius. Each group will explain its drawing. Have them put their names on the back of the drawing and tell the class these will be hung around the room until the end of the play when the class will look at them again.

As a class make a cluster drawing of any problems/conflicts for Hamlet, Queen Gertrude, Claudius, Denmark and the possible solutions. Place these responses on the board or a huge chart and discuss them. Now they should be ready and eager to read Hamlet. Without reading a word of the text, they know the names of the major characters, the situation and problems, and have make individual connections to the play.

R.O'Brien
3/16/93

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What is the significance of Hamlet's use of the following words; ass, whore, drab, and scullion?
What is the antecedent of the pronoun in " Fie upon 't!"?
What is Hamlet's plan and what makes him think that the plan will succeed?
Why does Hamlet now refer to the Devil and what does the reference tell us about him?
What two words define Hamlet's self-image?
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Lesson Plan for Master Works	Karen Bohlin
Introduction to MACBETH	March 16, 1993
Two Day Lesson Plan

## AN AFTERNOON AT THE THEATRE

### I. Philosophy

The purpose of this lesson is to introduce students to Elizabethan Theatre by examining structure, audience and staging.

Prerequisite: Study of OEDIPUS REX, the Theatre of Dionysus, Medieval Mystery and Morality Plays, Background on Shakespeare and his sonnets.

### II. Students: Heterogeneous Sophomore British Literature Class

### III. Objectives

The overall objective of this lesson is that students experience and appreciate the various elements of staging, acting and audience dynamics in Elizabethan Theatre.

A. Students will identify the function of the various parts of the Globe
B. Students can compare and contrast Elizabethan Theatre with the Theatre of Dionysus and Contemporary theatre
C. Students will examine the Elizabethan audience
D. Students will appreciate and employ the various skills of the Elizabethan actors.

### IV. Lesson Plan

DAY 1

A. First, I will ask the students to brainstorm for the typical structural and component characteristics of present day theaters (from seats and ticket prices to special effects).
B. After listing their responses on the board, I'll show them a model of the Globe and ask them to identify observable similarities and differences.
C. I will give a brief audiovisual presentation using selections from "What Everyone Should Know About Shakespeare"
  1. the theatre and the stage
  2. the actors
  3. the audience
D. We will conclude by identifying more similarities and differences between contemporary and Elizabethan drama and discussing the advantages and disadvantages of both.

E. I will ask for three volunteers to perform Act I scene i in class tomorrow and assign homework:

Read Act I scene i and write a short but complete explanation of how you would stage this scene.

DAY 2

A. I would have the students transform the classroom to create a "rough" simulation of the structure and atmosphere of the Elizabethan theatre.

1. arrange the desks in a circle (not entirely closed in the front of the room) to simulate the galleries
2. leave standing room in front will represent the pit or yard
3. mark the thrust stage with tape on the floor

B. As the students arrange desks I will hand each (with the exception of my actors) a piece of paper assigning them a particular status in Elizabethan Society (a price will also be marked: onepenny, twopenny or threepenny, and groundlings could be handed a small bag of peanuts); the students are to determine their corresponding seating (or standing room) in the theatre (classroom):

1. groundlings (approx 5 students)
2. middle class (majority of the students)
3. upper class (approx.2-4 students)

The chaos of each one trying to find his/her seat or standing place is important. The three student volunteers will step outside and prepare their dramatic entrance as the three witches. Without directing the audience in any way I will play loud sound effects of a thunderstorm and let the witches enter to command the audience's attention.

C. After our brief performance, we will regroup and discuss the atmosphere of the audience, the challenges facing the actors and the success of the opening scene.

D. To complete their picture of what an afternoon at the theatre was like in Elizabethan England, I would show the introduction of Lawrence Olivier's HENRY V.

# Lesson Plan and Bibliography for Macbeth

Michael Obel-Omia

Here is a list of books that I use to help me prepare classes for Macbeth. As you know, this list is highly incomplete. These texts provide a wealth of information on the play, the performance history, background material for the play, possible sources, and the social and political climate in England of the play. All these facts can be used in trying to bring the play to life. It is so important that the students know as much about the play as possible. The more comfortable they feel with the play, the better they discuss it. In addition these texts give a good summary of plot, teaching strategies, references, and criticism.

Barnet, Sylvan Macbeth. Signet Classic, New York:1963,1987

Boyce, Charles, Shakespeare A to Z, Laurel, New York:1990

Bradley, A. C., Shakespearean Tragedy 1904

Evan, G. Blakemore; Levin, Harry; et al The Riverside Shakespeare. Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston:1974

Goddard, Harold, The Meaning of Shakespeare, Phoenix, Chicago:1951

Harbage, Alfred, A Reader's Guide to William Shakespeare Hill and Wang, New York:1963

Muir, Kenneth, The Arden Macbeth. Routledge, New York:1951,1989

Roberts, Peter Shakespeare and the Moral Curriculum, Pripet Press, New York:1992

Traversi, D. A., An Approach to Shakespeare, Doubleday Anchor, Garden City, New York:1969

Wilders, John, New Prefaces to Shakespeare. Blackwell, Cambridge: 1988,1990

Plan for bright, motivated tenth grade students, who have had some Shakespearean experience. In my course, I love to refer to plays that the students have already studied. For example I refer to The Tempest when I wish to illustrate how Shakespeare works with usurpation by a trusted subject or brother. I have written this lesson plan in a narrative form, for I do not have formal educational school training. I vaguely understand that I should include such information as methodology, objective, assessment, etc. If you would like me to revise this in a more traditional fashion, I would be happy to do so.

The way I have taught Shakespeare for the past five years is to read the entire play in class. Outside of class they read the acts to come, but I read the entire play with them in class. Since they have read ahead, I can allude to scenes to come. I can tell them to mark their plays with notes as we see images that shape the play. I assign each student a part each day and let him read the play aloud. No matter the ability, students love to act out the play. Give them the opportunity to place their mouths around those spectacular words. Most of Shakespeare plays have convenient breaks when characters enter and exit. Macbeth is no exception. After forty or fifty lines of reading, I stop the readers, thank them, and then ask them to discuss what we have just read. The students are able to focus on motifs, images, and ideas that appear constantly. After we have discussed the scene for about ten minutes, we return to the reading. Not every scene needs a great deal of explication, but some scenes lend themselves to a close reading. Below is an example of how I would teach scenes one and two of act one of Macbeth. Since these students are bright, they enjoy just reading the text and discussing its significance. While teaching the play, I stress the importance of the first two scenes' ability to engage the audience with the supernatural and description of a bloody insurrection. We also focus on the speed of the play; how the action moves quickly from place to place.

I,i

After reading the scene, we remark on its brevity. We note that the first act of Macbeth seems to rush by. We then discuss that no one has time to think in the play. Political unrest occurs so quickly that no one has time for rational thought. Then we think about action and how some characters seem to regret actions taken. This serves as a convenient transition to the later scenes. I want the students to want to read on, so I constantly allude to events to come. Also I discuss the significance of these few lines. I point out to the students that the themes of play are stated in this first act.

Next we discuss the place, the heath. Ask the students what images a heath conjures up in their mind. After a discussion of the heath, I allude to King Lear, a play they will read their senior year, and discuss the significance of this barren place. We discuss how Scotland becomes a heath during the reign of Macbeth. Also the weather is an important factor. Why rain, why dismal, foul weather? How does it set the scene? What does the thunder do to set the scene? Also I give the students a brief history of Scotland. More important, I tell them about the stereotypical impression that the audience would have of Scotland. I remind them that the King of England, King James, is from Scotland and that he is a relative of the play's noble Banquo. (In the Riverside Shakespeare there is a picture of King James's family tree, with Banquo at the roots.)

Also we discuss the witches and their purpose. Why does Shakespeare open the play with witches? Our discussion includes the historical significance of the witches and how the witches attract the attention of the audience immediately. We note how they draw the reader into the play.

After a general discussion of the scene's significance, we move into the language. We examine Shakespeare's words. Why certain words, and why in the order he gives them.

Hurlyburly--uproar, tumult, confusion, especially the tumult of sedition or insurrection. We discuss why Shakespeare uses this particular word. This word suggests the pitch and toss which is about to be played with good and evil.

The reversal of "battle's lost and won becomes an interesting topic." Usually victory is stressed when talking about a battle, but here things are reversed. We discuss how this happens a few times in this scene. Everything about the scene reverses the normal state of things. It is here that I start to emphasis that power in Scotland is constantly in flux.

We end with another discussion of reversal as the witches are summoned by their pets, and they together chant "Fair is foul, and foul is fair:/Hover through the fog and filthy air"(I,i,11-12). We discuss the reversal of values in the play.

I,ii

Have the students read through lines 44. There are two natural breaks in this scene, and this is the first one.

Again discuss the scene. A camp--our first view of Scotland is at war in a makeshift location. A camp is temporary and here is built for the purposes of war. The scene opens with alarum from within. The tension rises, it forces the audience member to take notice as chaos ensues. The scene stands as a second introduction to the play, we discuss why this play has two introductions--one with the supernatural witches and one with the leader and loyal subjects of chaotic Scotland.

We focus on the word "bloody" in this first part of the scene. We note that the word "bloody" is mentioned over 100 times in the course of the play. Why is that? Shakespeare through language only emphasizes the bloodiness of the battle, the brutality of the battle, the harsh reality of war, sacrifice, and loyalty. "The savagery of the battle suggests a primitive era in a harsh and heath-like land, where violence is lethal and treachery black, but where virtue also may assume epic dimensions"(Harbage, 372). We also notice how loyal the Captain/Sergeant is--"Who, like a good and hardy soldier, fought/'Gainst (the king's son's) captivity"(I,ii,4-5).

I also emphasize that all we hear about Macbeth's good deeds are hearsay. Shakespeare does not take the time to show us Macbeth in battle. We discuss why Shakespeare does not show us a battle scene, instead we rely on words and impressions of loyal subjects. In a number of plays, Shakespeare asks the reader to understand a situation through many different characters's eyes. Their description is the only one we can know about an important event.

Next we discuss anticipation. Macbeth's name is mentioned several times by the Sergeant/Captain and is praised by Duncan. Our impression of this country is of a country ravaged by war, sedition, and treachery. We note that actions of violence, as long as they're loyal actions, are acceptable and acclaimed. These people expect barbaric behavior. For an illustration of this point, we study the Sergeant's/Captain's and Duncan's language. "Brave Macbeth(well he deserves that name)," "Valour's minion," "O valiant cousin! worthy gentleman!" and "valour arm'd. I contrast these phrases with the more violent phrases in this same speech: "Brandished steel," "smok'd with bloody execution," "carv'd out his passage," "Till he unseam'd him from the nave to th'chops," and "fix'd his head upon our battlements." By the time we finish hearing Macbeth's name, we so desire to see him. Shakespeare has built up in our minds an image of Macbeth. We want to see him and praise him, for he is truly worthy of our praise. We also discuss how Macbeth is rewarded and admired for his violence. Also the precise description of Macbeth's work glorifies his blood-thirsty nature. We question the king's enthusiasm for Macbeth's overly violent acts (He does not need to unseam someone from stomach to jaw). Also we note the problem with praising Macbeth for the harshness of his deeds. The more bloody, the better it seems. What type of society is this? Thus Macbeth, celebrated for violence, finds violence natural and necessary.

The "Till he unseam'd him from the nave to th'chops" line serves two purposes. One it shows how violent Macbeth's actions are, and two, it introduces the tailoring imagery that pervades the play.

The fair/foul theme is mentioned again when the Captain/Sergeant says "So from that spring, whence comfort seem'd to come,/Discomfort swells"(I,ii,27-28). Also the idea of appearance versus reality is discussed. What is seemingly fair is foul, just as those who are seemingly fair--Cawdor--are foul. As Duncan notes later, "There's no art/To find the mind's construction in the face." This theme is studied greatly by the class for the remainder of the play.

Then we end discussing this section by taking up the reality of his wounds. "But I am faint, my gashes cry for help." This line reminds us of the severity and reality of the war and loyalty. Also Duncan's words concerning Honor remind us of the fair/foul idea.

When Rosse and Angus come in, they contrast the disloyal Thane of Cawdor to Bellona's bridegroom. This contrast heightens the idea of honor. Who can be trusted? Also Rosse's and Angus's description focuses on disloyalty of the nameless Thane of Cawdor, while the Captain's/Sergeant's focuses on the loyalty of Macbeth.

The scene ends with a discussion of deception and the conferring of the Thane's title on Macbeth. We discuss the appropriateness of giving the title of a traitor to a most loyal warrior and subject.

We end this class by noting the ending of the scene; it is another way of expressing "Fair is foul, and foul is fair," and evoking the reversal theme.

This should take a teacher at least forty minutes to discuss these themes of reversal, deception, blood, sedition, loyalty, the supernatural, and the anticipation. This lesson plan could take as little as forty minutes or as much as three hours, depending on how in depth you go into each issue.

In order to test the students to see how well they understand the material, I give them in class writing assignments, which allow them to explore particular themes.

# UNIT PLANS

# Theater in Review

Patricia Maye-Wilson

Madison Park High School

Roxbury, Mass

# Theater in Review

Philosophy:

These lessons are designed to provide students the special opportunity to,"review the theatre," in a different light. Students will examine some of the following issues of the theatre from the Elizabethan style theatre to modern day theatre dea;omg with the troubles of the theatre. Students will get a chance to look at multicultural theatres and to view different theatres issues from Shakespeare to the Black theatre. Students will glance at the following troubles or interest of the theatre such as: restoration/preservation, fundraising, changing the guard/leadership, subscribership, politics of the theatre, and increasing community interest.

Students will get a chance to come through the, "back soor," of sorts of the theatre through their own personal experiences. The lessons are also designed to give students a sympathetic senst of a better understanding of some of the painstaking wor and the commitment it takes to put on a play, to hold a theatre company together, to hold a theatre in good standing.

The students will focus on some of the politics, history, corruption, operations of the theatre. Coincidently, the students will also discover and learn about different cultures. Students will have fun fostering a better understanding and appreciation of the theatre. Students will review different current news articles to gain some initial insight and interest about different theatres around the world such as: London, New York, Brussels, Paris, Chicago and Italy.

Description of Students:

These lessons are designed for Moderate Special Needs students consisting of grades 9-12, predominantly males, students of a substantially seperate classroom at an urban high school setting. This unit will be presented in an English class. These students may have had little or no exposure or experience dealing with the theatre. Even though, the topics will be quite interesting this will be also somewhat a new discovery to some of the students.

Goals/Purpose of Lesson:

Research and reading about a particular subject like the theatre can act as a stimulus to fire students up to want to discover more new information about such an interesting topic. This unit is meant to build gradual interests on what the theater is really about sort of reviewing, "back door politics." This unit is also designed to raise lots of interests and questions about the theatre. Students will begin to realize that there is more to the theatre thatn meets the eye. In other words, the theater is not just strewn together. The students will probably discover that the theatre is sort of a maze or a puzzle through this learning experience. Hopefully, this new awareness will be a positive enlightment about the theatre.

Details of each lesson plan with a short outline:

Note: This particular unit will probably last for atleast 2 weeks. Some of the lessons will probably last for 2-3 days depending on the student's pace, interest, motivation and their accessibility to the needed resources.

Day 1: Troubles and issues of the theater: Students will peruse through several current news articles about the mishaps and troubles pertaining to new and old theatre houses. This background infromation will be discussed and shared for even more exclusive background about the theatre. The students will brainstorm and list the different issues and troubles of the theatre on paper after reading some specific background information. We will discuss the differnces of the different theatres and some of the practices and creativity of some of the important players of the theatre like the directors. We will briefly discuss the location of different theatres in the unit.

Some sample questions might be: 1. Have you ever beem to a play? If so, when and did you enjoy the theatre? 2. Would you be interested in coming to the theatre again to see a wonderful play? If so, can we start to plan now? 3. What play/plays would you like to see? Make a brief of some plays you are interested in. Did you appreciate reading the news articles? Did you learn anything new or interesting about the theatre?

Materials needed: chalk, chalkboard, pencils, paper, news articles and magazines.

Day 2-4: Map/Location Day--This lesson will prove to be absolutely fun because the students will get a chance to use their imagination to travel all over the world or we could consider raising money to do one local trip to the theatre. We will get the opportunity to revisit history. Each student will receive their own set of maps of locations such as: London, New York, Brussels, Paris, Chicago and Italy. After breifly examing the maps, students will select a location. The teacher will discuss with the students the plan of this lesson. Students will break-up in teams of two members each (The teacher may increase the team size according to the number of students in class). Students will use their imagination to travel all over by planning a trip for a theatre group of students to one of the places which they have selected. We will use play money to pay for the trip. Students will stage their planned trip

p.3
in a short skit performed in the classroom. Students will use other resources like an international hotel directory to pinpoint hotels in each location. Students will learn the names of each one of these famous theatres and theatre associations such as: The Globe Theatre, The Lincoln Center, The Monnaie, John Houseman Theater and the Ebony Talent Associates, etc. Students will also retrieve inner-city maps to locate the precise location of each theater or theater company. (These maps may come from the National Geographic Magazine or from American Automobile Association or an Atlas). Each student will receive a folder.

Day 5: Restorations/Preservations of the Theatre: The students will brainstorm and discuss some of the renovations and preservation problems of the everyday maintenance of the theater. They will discuss the cost and planning a budget to cover the expenses. If at all feasible, if we can confiscate a real budget from a local theatre, we will be able to review an exact piece of real hands-on source which will be used or have been used. After reviewing the real budget, the students can design a fake budget and pretend that they are owners of a theatre. Each student will be given paper and pencil to design their own budgets. Afterwards, each student will be given small pieces of oaktag or drawing paper to sketch or draw their own virgin of their theater. Magic markers and colored paper will also be available for students to color their theatre. This activity will give the students greater incite about theater budgets and how they work.

Materials needed: oaktag, colored pencils, magic markers, accounting paper, plain paper, chalk, chalkboard and a budget.

Day 6: Fundraising--In this lesson, we will explore why some theatres had to close or merge together. Students will take a close look at two different kinds of budgets: one budget of a surviving theater and a budget of a closed theater. We will try to analyze the two budgets and compare each budget and try to figure out why one theater survived and the other theater subsided. We will make a list of suggestions and recommendations. We will take a close look at employee payroll, operations payroll, subscribership, individual contributions. proposal writing and foundations. The class would invite a local theater director to the class to share his/her experience in this leadership role.

Day 7: Changing of the guard/new leadership: The students will read 2-3 news articles on new leadership in the theater. We will discuss some of the common threads and common themes which transpires when a change happens. Some of the questions

p.4
which may be asked: Who gets blamed for the current problems and why? Why did this particular theatre need a change? What are some of the real politics of each theatre? What happens to these theater folk who are removed/transferred? What kind of education and experience do you need in order to hold down one of these leadership jobs? Are there many minorities holding these kinds of positions? If not, why not?

Days 8th, 9th and 10th days: The students and teacher will plan a school exhibit to share with the school community as soon as this activity is approved by the headmistress. We will also plan a field trip to the Huntington Theatre to see a play, hopefully something Shakespearean will be on stage.

Evaluation: This would be demonstrated by the enthusiasm and participation of the students in each of the related activities. The ability to understand, and analyze the new information. The familarity of the different theatres from the Elizabethan theatre to modern day theatre. Understanding the histories and culturals of other people in the world and to develop a level of comfort and tolerable. A better understanding of "back door politics," of the theater. Learn how to do some research.

Related Assignment:
Reviewing other ethnic theatres such as: The Cambodian Theatre, The Latino Theatre, The Japanese Theatre, The Chinese Theatre, The Indian Theatre, etc. discuss the issues these theatres may have. Plan field trips to see plays at these theatres.

Resources: New York Times newspaper, The Boston Glove newspaper, The Boston Herald newspaper, The Baystate Banner newspeper, The National Geographic and Black Masks magazine.

Book: Schoenbaum, S., Shakespeare: The Globe and The World. Folger Shakespeare Library: Oxford University Press, New York, 1979.

# Theaters Reporting Losses

N.Y.T. **By GLENN COLLINS** 3/31/93

The nation's nonprofit professional theaters suffered substantial losses last season in government and corporate financing, as well as a decline in subscription audiences and cutbacks in staff, theater budgets and touring productions, according to a new study of the 1991-92 season.

The survey of 182 theater organizations was conducted by the Theater Communications Group, a Manhattan-based national service organization for nonprofit professional theaters.

The institutions surveyed, which played to a total attendance of more than 16 million during the 1991-92 season and constituted a $366 million industry, were in 112 towns and cities in 36 states and in Washington. (A number of New York City theaters were included — among them the Manhattan Theater Club, Lincoln Center Theater, the New York Shakespeare Festival and the CSC Repertory — but no individual financial figures for them were given.)

### With Operating Deficits

"The recession is the problem, and nonprofit theaters have reached a new level of fiscal crisis," said Barbara Janowitz, the Theater Communications Group's director of management, who wrote the report. "Nearly half of the theaters we surveyed ended the 1992 fiscal year with operating deficits."

An alarming trend, she said, was that the aggregate operating deficits for the 182 theaters more than doubled over the last year, to $6.5 million as compared with $2.8 million during the 1990-1991 season.

Federal support for the theaters surveyed dropped nearly 8 percent below that in the previous year, to $8.3 million. Grants from state governments declined nearly 14 percent from the previous year, to $7.5 million. And corporate support declined nearly 3 percent, to $19.4 million.

Nearly two-thirds of the theaters reported a decline in the number of their season subscribers. And for the first time in the 19-year history of the survey, the theaters' subscription audiences for their main series (that part of the subscription season offered to audiences as a package) declined 3.3 percent from the previous year.

### The Curtain Comes Down

Four theaters suspended operations during the season, including the Los Angeles Theater Center, the Eureka Theater in San Francisco, the Theater Project Company in St. Louis and the Snowmass/Aspen Repertory Theater in Colorado. This brings to 23 the number of companies that have been forced to close during the last five years, according to the report.

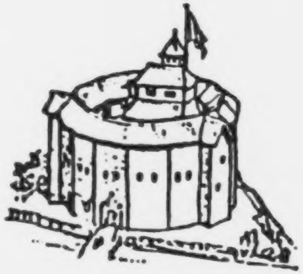
"Should the economic trends seen in the past few years continue their current pattern, theaters, having already been forced to cut back programs and staff, will be fighting for their very survival, and many more companies may fold," Ms. Janowitz said.

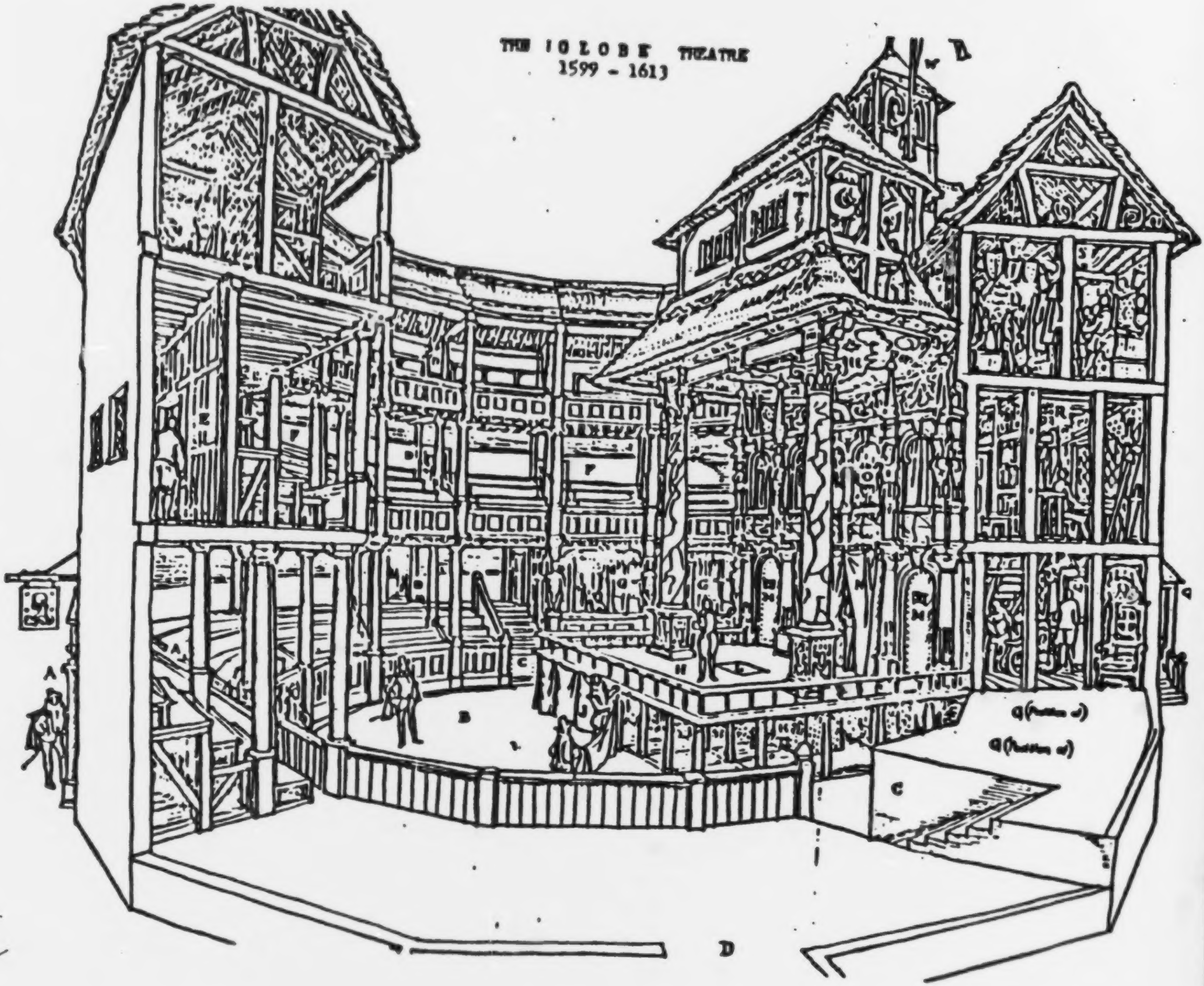
The survey was conducted in September and October of 1992, when a questionnaire was sent to 320 theaters, of which 182 responded. The returned questionnaires were checked against audit statements from the groups, according to the report.

## A CONJECTURAL RECONSTRUCTION

KEY

| | |
|---|---|
| AA | Main entrance |
| B | The Yard |
| CC | Entrances to lowest gallery |
| D | Entrances to staircase and upper galleries |
| E | Corridor serving the different sections of the middle gallery |
| F | Middle gallery ('Twopenny Rooms') |
| G | 'Gentlemen's Rooms' or 'Lords' Rooms' |
| H | The stage |
| J | The hanging, being put up round the stage |
| K | The 'Hell' under the stage |
| L | The stage trap, leading down to the Hell |
| MM | Stage doors |
| N | Curtained 'place behind the stage' |
| O | Gallery above the stage, used as required sometimes by musicians, sometimes by spectators, and often as part of the play |
| P | Back-stage area (the tiring-house) |
| Q | Tiring-house door |
| R | Dressing-rooms |
| S | Wardrobe and storage |
| T | The hut housing the machine for lowering enthroned gods, etc., to the stage |
| U | The 'Heavens' |
| W | Hoisting the playhouse flag |





THE GLOBE THEATRE
1599 - 1613

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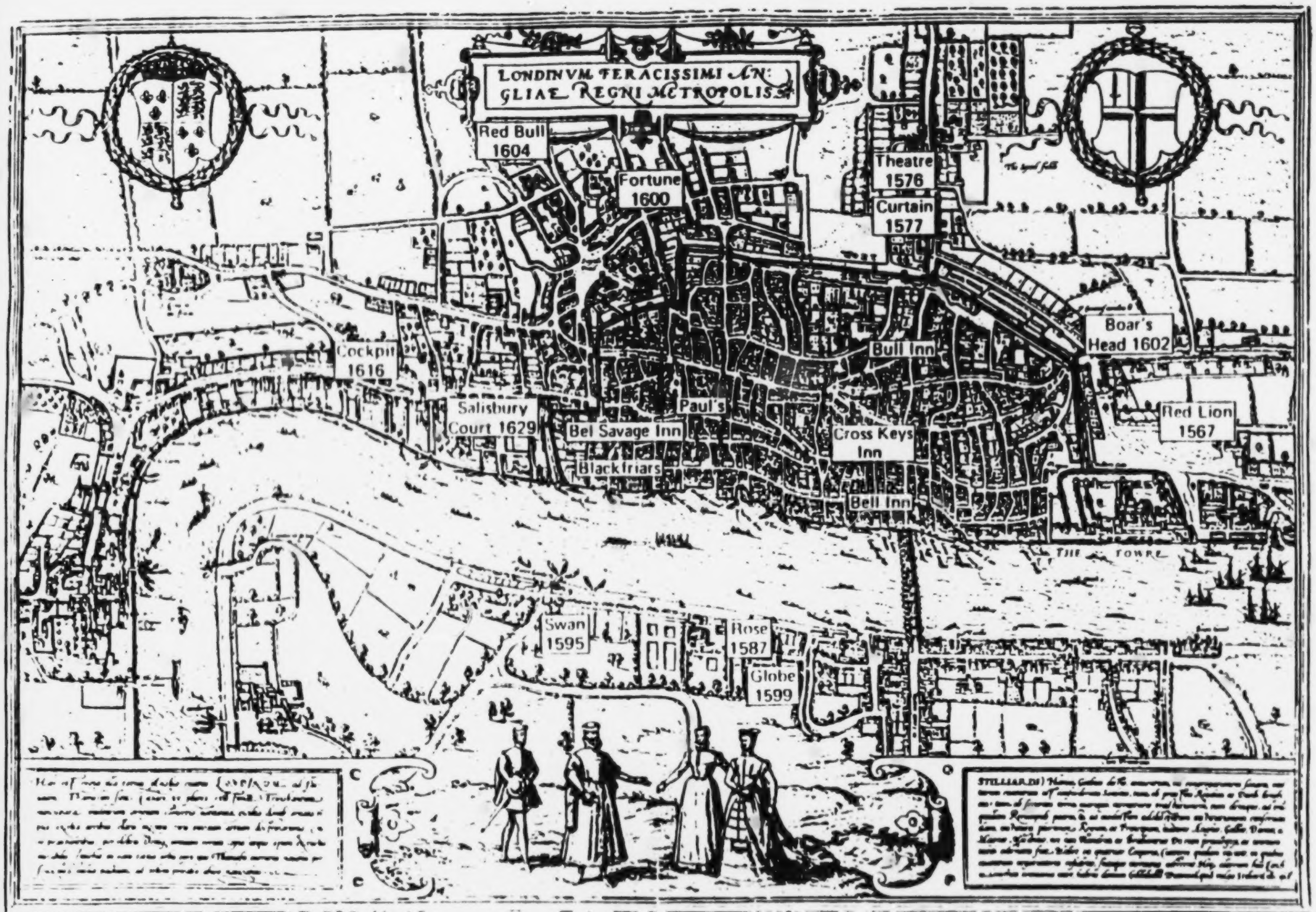
LONDINVM FERACISSIMI ANGLIAE REGNI METROPOLIS
Red Bull 1604
Fortune 1600
Theatre 1576
Curtain 1577
Boar's Head 1602
Bull Inn
Cockpit 1616
Salisbury Court 1629
Paul's
Bel Savage Inn
Cross Keys Inn
Red Lion 1567
Blackfriars
Bell Inn
THE TOWRE
Swan 1595
Rose 1587
Globe 1599

2. A map of London, showing its playhouses built between 1567 and 1629. The engraving is from Braun and Hogenberg's *Civitates Orbis Terrarum*, first edition, 1572. The playhouses and inns used for playing are marked in their approximate locations, with the date of building where known. In the seventy years from 1572 London expanded to cover most of the periphery shown here.

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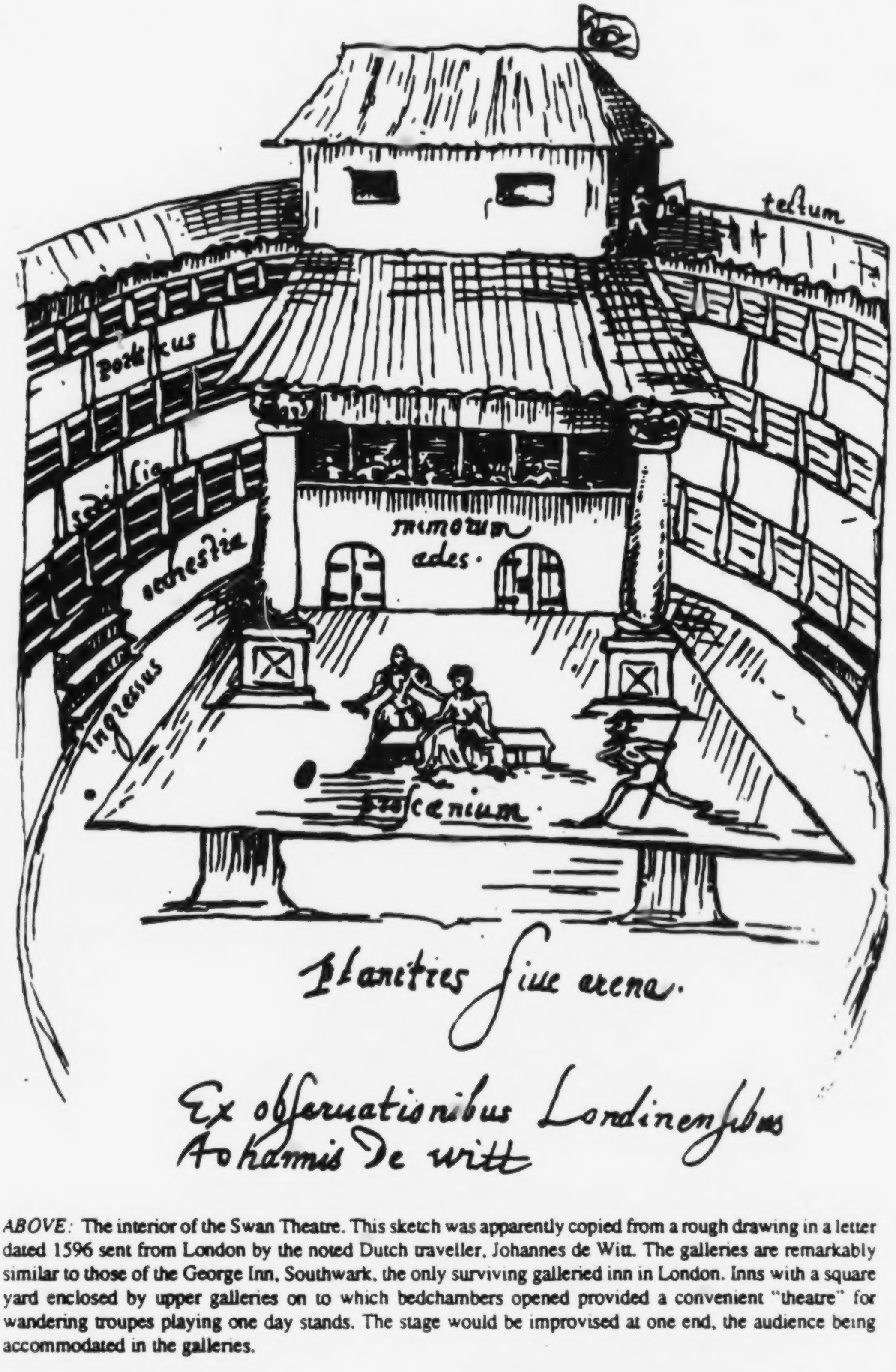
The an… appropriateness … helping the audience …


tectum
porticus
sedilia
orchestra
ingressus
mimorum aedes
proscenium
planities sive arena
Ex obſeruationibus Londinenſibus
Johannis De witt

*ABOVE:* The interior of the Swan Theatre. This sketch was apparently copied from a rough drawing in a letter dated 1596 sent from London by the noted Dutch traveller, Johannes de Witt. The galleries are remarkably similar to those of the George Inn, Southwark, the only surviving galleried inn in London. Inns with a square yard enclosed by upper galleries on to which bedchambers opened provided a convenient "theatre" for wandering troupes playing one day stands. The stage would be improvised at one end, the audience being accommodated in the galleries.

The New York Times

Michel Piccoli, left, and Bulle Ogier in a production of Ibsen's "John Gabriel Borkman" at the Théâtre de l'Odéon.

4/6/93 N.Y.T.

# Theater in Paris: Élan, Éclat and Assistance

By JOHN ROCKWELL

Special to The New York Times

PARIS, April 5 — Tonight the seventh annual Molière awards, the Paris equivalent of the Tonys, will reward this season's theatrical excellence. There is a lot of excellence to reward. With far more government financing than is available in New York, Paris offers a dizzying range of theatrical possibilities. This week, 173 active theaters are listed in the entertainment guides, some with more than one offering.

Right now, four productions, widely admired and likely to be acclaimed at tonight's ceremony, are playing at four of the city's most important and representative theaters. Among the others are homages to Carlo Goldoni and Alfred de Musset, vehicles for several popular French stars and the second new work of the season from the ever-fecund Peter Brook.

There are several kinds of Paris theater, apart from purely commercial ventures like the Mogador, home of "Les Miserables" last season and this season's "Kiss Me Kate." First come the tradition-laden jewels of French culture like the Comedie-Française, which has been ensconced in its home at the Palais Royal since 1791 (the troupe itself dates from a century earlier).

**Pan-European House**

It is hardly the only venerable theater in town. The National Odéon Theater, which in its current form dates from 1818, now houses the Theater of Europe, the French Socialist Government's main effort to unite European theatrical culture with Paris as its capital. Off and on over the last 150 years the theater has also served as a second home for the Comedie-Française and, more recently, as the site of a troupe run by the actor Jean-Louis Barrault. The Theater of Europe was founded in 1983 and first entrusted to Giorgio Strehler; it is now directed by a Spaniard, Lluis Pasqual.

Other Paris theaters court a deliberately raffish image or are situated in working-class neighborhoods and then infused with artistic life by idealistic directors. Mr. Brook's home, the Bouffes du Nord, was a rundown outpost in the grimy north of Paris (it still is, really) before he and his producer and partner Micheline Rosan took it over. Now it is so identified with Mr. Brook's theatrical vision that its mottled, russet back wall and funky overall ambiance were slavishly imitated in the renovation of the Majestic Theater by the Brooklyn Academy of Music.

> With help from the Socialists, 173 productions are now on the boards.

The Amandiers Theater in the northwestern Paris suburb of Nanterre is a more recent structure. Although its origins were in Andre Malraux's "Houses of Culture" scattered about France in the 1960's and its present theater was completed in 1976, its current eclat comes again from Socialist cultural policy. Patrice Chéreau (best known in the United States as director of the Wagne "Ring" that Pierre Boulez conducted at the Bayreuth Festival in 1980) wa installed as director there in 1982. I 1990 he withdrew to freelance, turning the direction over to Jean-Pierr Vincent.

Nanterre today is like a cross between the Public Theater in the J seph Papp era and the much-lamen ed Pepsico Summerfare at the Stat University College at Purchase, N.Y As at Purchase, there is a huge moc ernistic lobby full of people eatin and otherwise milling about, and booming voice periodically proclaim ing that the show in Theater B abou to begin. As at Papp's Publi Nanterre mixes high quality, va guard experimentation and a polic of peppering productions with star

**Goldoni Tribute**

This is the 200th-anniversary ye of the death, in Paris, of Goldoni, Venetian playwright who epitomi commedia dell'arte. Jacques L salle, the director of the Come

Continued on Page C18

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Yoshi Oida in "L'Homme Qui," a Peter Brook production at the Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord in Paris.

4/6/93 N.Y.T.

# The Enviable State of Paris's Theater

Continued From Page C13

Française, has honored Goldoni — who is also receiving several other Paris productions, including one at the commercial Mogador, and performances all over Europe, especially in Italy — with a handsome production of "La Serva Amorosa" ("The Loving Servant"). It opened in December, runs in repertory until May 23 and is one of the tightest tickets in town.

Mr. Lassalle's approach is unusual in the seriousness with which he treats what might seem grist for a frothy comic opera. Only when necessary does he indulge in (stoop to?) commedia dell'arte high jinks. Instead, this tale of a devoted servant protecting the interests of her innocent master and his befuddled father while all the time preserving her virtue and honor, is played absolutely straight, with touching results.

The big event of the Odéon season is a properly trans-European affair, a production of Ibsen's late play "John Gabriel Borkman" that has already been seen in Lausanne and Brussels. It will be at the Odéon until May 12 and will tour through June to Nimes, Milan, Vienna, Munich and Frankfurt.

The Germanic interest in this French-language production stems from the participation of Luc Bondy, a Swiss-born director who has worked mostly in Germany; of Erich Wonder, a celebrated Austrian set designer, and of Botho Strauss, Germany's most popular serious playwright, as "artistic adviser." (One of the acclaimed productions this winter at Nanterre has been another non-French play directed by a German, Matthias Langhoff's staging of O'Neill's "Desire Under the Elms.")

## Grandiose Ibsen

At the Odéon, a German twist can perhaps be felt in the determination of Mr. Bondy and Mr. Strauss to stress the cosmic implications of Borkman, a failed, half-mad banker enmeshed in a bitter struggle between two sisters, who finally merges with Nature in a kind of Dionysian apotheosis. Mr. Wonder's settings — above all the vast lair of Borkman's attic study in which he has locked himself for seven years, and Borkman's death climbing a mystical mountain and expiring in a bed suspended in swirling snow — might seem designed to overwhelm the French actors and Ibsen's text.

No chance of that with a cast like this. Bulle Ogier and Nada Strancar as the two sisters are strong and assured, but the real star is Michel Piccoli, who brings to Borkman a compelling mixture of craggy grandeur and nutsy eccentricity.

Mr. Piccoli was the aging painter in Jacques Rivette's four-hour film "La Belle Noiseuse." His nude model in that film, Emmanuelle Béart, can be seen in the season's big hit at Nanterre, Musset's "On Ne Badine Pas Avec l'Amour." Musset was a mid-19th-century chronicler of social manners and the vagaries of love, and Mr. Vincent, this theater's director, is exploring his work with two plays this season, the other being "Il Ne Faut Jurer de Rien."

Miss Béart plays a cold and coquettish woman who spars with an equally manipulative young man. The man "trifles" with another woman to entice his true love. But just as the principals profess their affections in a high romantic style, the other woman kills herself, bringing the play to an abrupt end.

This does not seem an entirely convincing attestation to Musset's strengths as a playwright. The other woman, though charmingly played by Isabelle Carré, is never sufficiently established to make her death seem more than a contrivance. In addition, the Cinemascopic breadth of Nanterre's large theater tempted Mr. Vincent into extraneous business (villagers lounging about, etc.) to flesh out his stage picture. Still, the star performances and some of Musset's witty social commentary make the evening more than worthwhile.

## More Small-Scale Brook

Mr. Brook has been unusually active this season. Hard on the heels of his admired reinterpretation of Debussy's "Impressions de Pelléas," he has unveiled a chamber piece called "L'Homme Qui." It will play in Paris until May and then join "Pelléas" on tour in Europe.

This 100-minute play for four actors reunites some of the main people who distinguished Mr. Brook's "Mahabharata" in the mid-1980's. There is the playwright Jean-Claude Carrière, who helped Mr. Brook, his collaborator Marie-Hélène Estienne and the actors codify their improvisations. And there are the actors Maurice Benichou (who was the wonderful Krishna in the original French version of "Mahabharata"), the Senegalese Sotigui Kouyati and the Japanese Yoshi Oida, along with the young David Bennent, who starred in the film "The Tin Drum."

The piece was inspired by the case studies in the neurologist Oliver Sacks's book "The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat": not just the title story, which formed the basis of Michael Nyman's opera of the same name, but a whole series of vignettes.

The play sometimes breaks down into a sequence of short scenes, with disturbed patients displaying their vaguely comic, vaguely touching eccentricities. There is little of Mr. Sacks's gentle commentary or indications of possible therapies. But the acting, with the quartet switching roles from doctors to patients and back again, justifies this exercise all by itself.

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*LONDINUM FLORENTISSIMA BRITANNIAE URBS, a panoramic view of London from the south by the Amsterdam engraver Claes Jansz Visscher. Visscher's view (here represented in a version ca. 1625 of the original view of 1616) shows the theatres, St. Paul's Cathedral, London Bridge, the Tower and other major buildings.*

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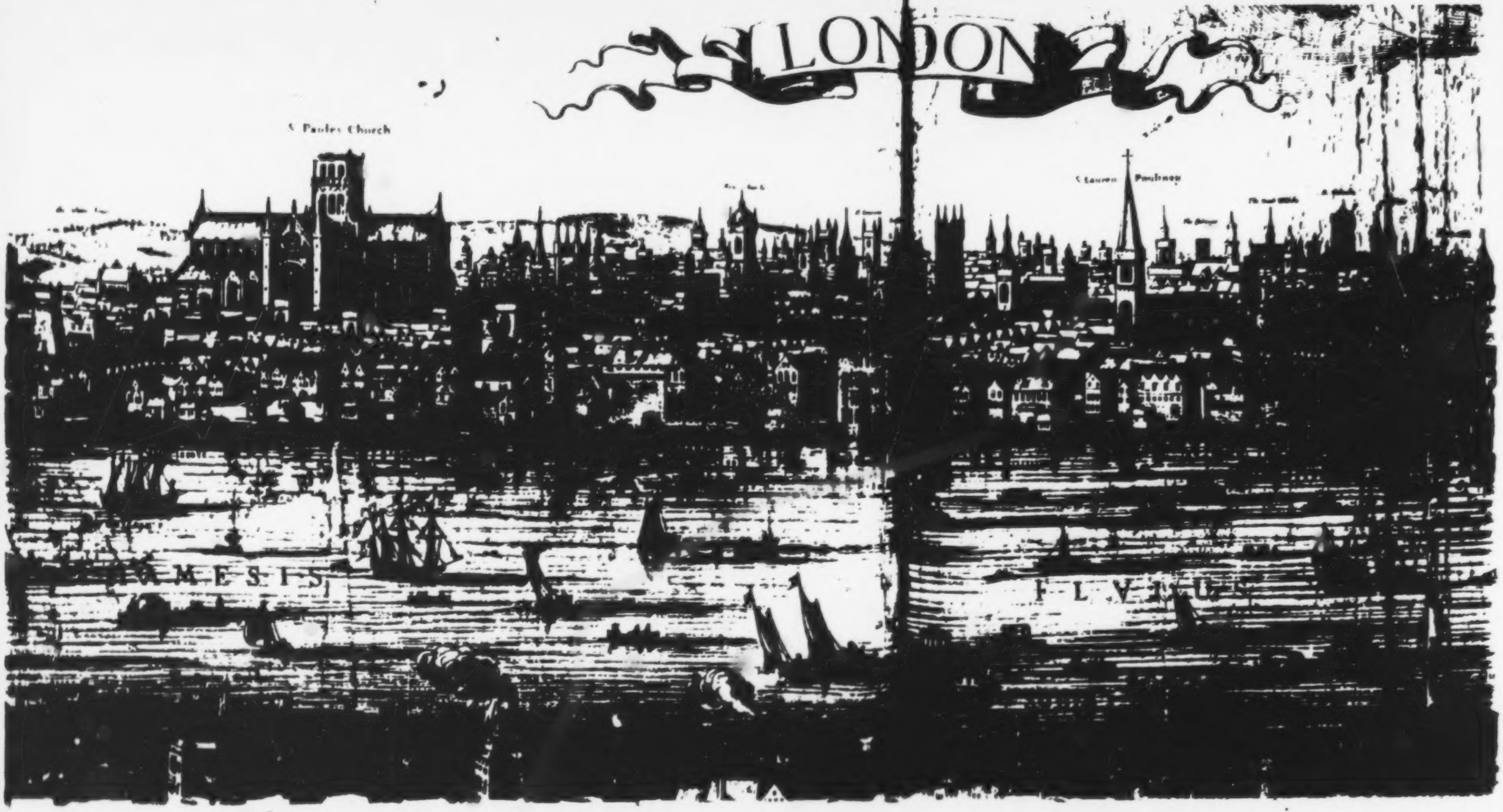
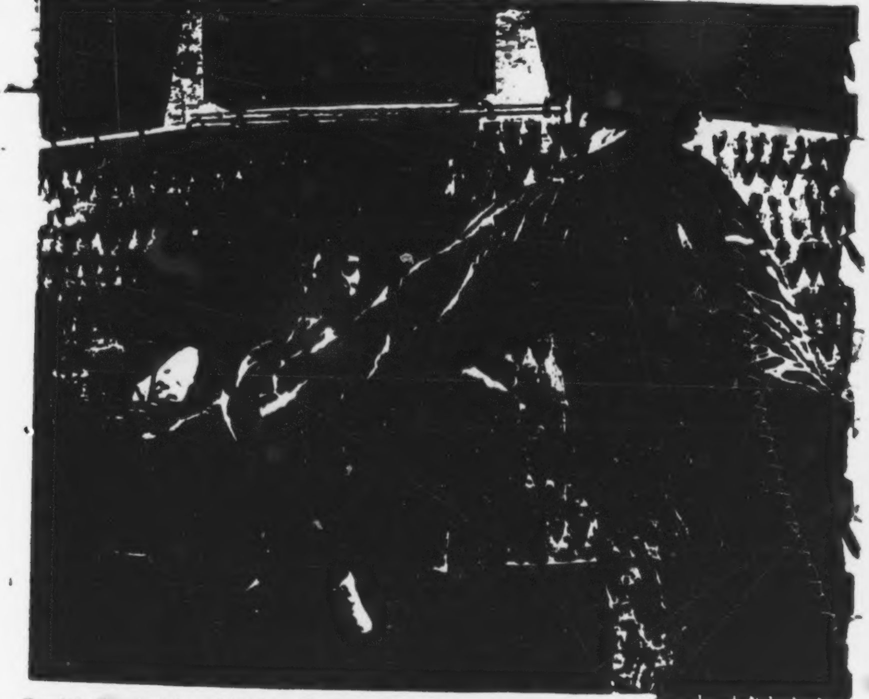

LONDON
S. Paules Church
S Laurens Poultney
THAMESIS
FLVVIUS

The New York Times



Dominic Borelli, left, and Graham Pountney of the What You Will Theater Company in a rehearsal of Shakespeare's "Twelfth Night" at the Old Hall in Lincoln's-Inn Square, London.

# Purists Are Playing Shakespeare With Little Rehearsal or Direction

By JOHN ROCKWELL

Special to The New York Times

LONDON — This winter a troupe of professional actors who call themselves the What You Will Theater Company are traipsing about London in plays by William Shakespeare. Nothing unusual in that, one might think; London is clotted with Shakespearean actors acting Shakespeare.

But these actors are doing it largely, with a few insignificant compromises, without rehearsal. Each knows his or her own part, but not anyone else's. All they have are cues, three-word tags that trigger their own next lines.

They also do without sets, lighting, extraneous props and, naturally, a stage director. Just a playing space, stock costumes, a banner or sword or chair, an audience and a text: Shakespeare's original, learned from its First Folio typography, which is supposed to provide all the clues the actors need as to emotion and emphasis.

The search for "authenticity," so popular in classical music, came relatively late to dance and even later to acting. But in acting, the movement is well under way, to judge from this troupe and its parent, the Original Shakespeare Company Ltd. as well as from attempts to recreate the physical conditions of Elizabethan theater, most notably in the longstanding effort to reconstruct the Globe Theater near its actual London site.

> Seeking authenticity with soap opera methods.

In no way did a What You Will performance of "Twelfth Night" seem amateurish, and it certainly avoided the excesses of "directors' theater."

### Who Needs a Director?

"Why should I have a director if I can do it myself?" argued Jane Ad[illegible], one of the quartet of actors who founded the What You Will company.

The [illegible] quest for authenticity [illegible] theater. Little [illegible] musical instruments, remains to provide the [illegible] like a [illegible] situation. There's a text, but no real way, or it was thought, to ascertain the acting style that animated that text centuries ago.

[illegible] in England especially, the continuing performance tradition has been so strong that scholarly efforts to reinvent the form met a wall of self-interested resistance. If few thought the art of Shakespearean acting was broken, there was little impetus to fix it.

Discussions as to just how Shakespeare's plays were performed at the dawn of the 17th century have abounded for years. The current efforts owe their direct lineage, it would seem, to the Royal Shakespeare Company director John Barton. He personally inspired a director, Patrick Tucker, who worked with the company's educational wing, but who is now best known as the director of the popular British soap opera "Brookside," on ITV, the independent television station.

It was Mr. Tucker who, by his account, took Mr. Barton's speculations and realized them comprehensively and systematically. Mr. Tucker's speculations have thus far appeared primarily in closed actors' workshops and [illegible] performances of Shakespeare [illegible] by his Original Shakespeare Company. It took the [illegible] and ambitious professionals of the What You Will company, who still attend Mr. Tucker's workshops, to go out and perform entire plays for a paying public, which they started doing this winter.

Mr. Tucker said he had used his training as a physicist to marshal the available evidence to create a plausib-

Continued on Page C16

# Shakespeare With Little Rehearsal

3/16/93 NYT

Continued From Page C13

ble hypothesis, without fear of received opinion. He first put his ideas into practice at a Royal Shakespeare workshop performance of "Romeo and Juliet" at the University of Western Kentucky in 1975, and has been refining them ever since.

The problem, as he conceived it, was that the Globe Theater actors, to judge from their surviving performance schedules, presented a dizzying range of plays every week, with a couple of premieres a month. How could they fit in all that work? His conclusion was that they simply learned their lines and leapt onto the stage, dispensing with all the bothersome baggage of a modern theatrical rehearsal, and gaining in spontaneity and alertness in the process.

"My work in television has reinforced my work in Shakespeare," he conceded. "I shoot 'Brookside' all day, and once you've done it, you forget it. That's what television acting is, and it's probably what Elizabethan actors did, too."

"Of course," Miss Atkins added gravely, "the only difference is that the writing in 'Brookside' and the writing in Shakespeare are poles apart."

Mr. Tucker also suggests that the lack of copyright protection in Elizabethan times, and the enthusiasm of rival impresarios to poach popular plays, encouraged a method whereby no one but the author knew the entire play. Actors were given only their own parts — period "cue scripts" have survived — and hence couldn't defect and take hit plays with them.

### 'It's All in the Text'

The First Folio, Mr. Tucker contends, with its antique punctuation and capitalization, provides all the indications an actor needs. "The First Folio is stuffed full of actors' notes, stripped by modern editors," he said.

All this sounds suspiciously like the manuscript fetishism of the musical period-practice fanatics, who have been attacked for ignoring the unwritten conventions that couldn't be

## Trying to return to original texts and techniques.

notated in a printed score. The Shakespeare purists could be accused of trying to reduce Shakespeare to a miraculously simple formula.

Even Mr. Tucker and his disciples concede that much of their work is speculative. "A lot of the fine-tuning of what we do is just plain guesswork," said David Angus, a What You Will actor. But Mr. Tucker argues that no plausible countertheories have been advanced.

There have been compromises. Neither Mr. Tucker's Original Shakespeare Company nor the What You Will company — with Miss Atkins — cast boys in women's roles. Mr. Tucker argues that some women did act in Elizabethan times and that "boys" really meant postpubescent apprentices. But he also concedes, "I have a large number of actresses who want to work this way."

### Less Than Perfect Freshness

In addition, presenting several consecutive performances of the same play, even in different locations, robs all performances after the first of the ideal freshness. For that, one would need a closely packed repertory of different plays, as well as a stunted education in which modern actors and audiences could somehow encounter Shakespeare without prior knowledge.

Hence no one is ready to jettison the modern British Shakespeare tradition altogether. Sam Wanamaker, the London-based American director and actor who leads the project to reconstruct the Globe Theater, says he prefers a more open-ended approach in which Mr. Tucker's method would be employed for only one "purely educational" production a season.

Mr. Wanamaker places his faith in the structure itself, which he says will be the first to come even close to the actual conditions of Shakespeare's time. Even so, however, some guessing is involved, since the actual Globe site cannot be systematically excavated, given a more recent, historically protected building constructed above it.

"The physical conditions — no sets, natural lighting, natural acoustics — will impose the conditions of the performances," Mr. Wanamaker contended. "But we don't want to present museum theater."

### Two Plays in Germany

The Globe construction is well under way, proceeding at a leisurely pace to match the intake of funds. It has been dogged for years by money problems. Even now, only a third of the more than $30 million needed has been raised, and the opening of the Globe Theater itself, not counting the projected surrounding structures, has been put off until the spring of 1994 at the earliest.

In the meantime, Mr. Tucker
member of the Globe artistic d
torate, and is testing his actors'
tions of the First Folio texts u
auspices of the International Sh
speare Globe Center. He has eve
full-scale performances on
ground that he wished not to "ex
actors" by imposing a profit-sha
scheme of the sort that the What
Will actors have voluntarily ado
But now his Original Shakesp
Company has received a fully s
dized invitation to present two p
at a Shakespeare festival in Ne
Germany, and he has agreed to
dertake "Romeo and Juliet"
"The Merchant of Venice" ther
June.

That means there will be
troupes, overlapping and riv
though they are, positioning th
selves to appear on Mr. Wana
ker's Globe stage. Mr. Tucker's
company will make a "presentat
at a Globe-sponsored Shakespe
festival in London in April, and
What You Will actors seem confid
that their ensemble will eventuall
seen at the Globe as well.

"We're not saying we should ha
the right to work there," said
Angus. "But," added another act
Paul Alexander, optimistically, "
Globe should have a company to p
form the way we do. And by the ti
they open, we should be by far
strongest one."

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Black Masks
Jan/Feb

# Chicago's Black Theater Beat

## by Caldwell Titcomb

*The city of Chicago is now the third most populous in the country with about 2.85 million residents. Blacks, about 40 percent of the total, make up a constituency of well over a million persons.*

The "Windy City" boasts an amazing amount of theatrical activity. The League of Chicago Theatres comprises 114 companies and other groups bring the total to around 200. The city is able to support three independent Black companies along with two that are affiliated with colleges.

Of the former, the oldest is the non-profit ETA Creative Arts Foundation, incorporated in 1971 as an outgrowth of Ebony Talent Associates (whence the initials). The founder and still president is Abena Joan Brown, an articulate and indefatigable force. After several years of roaming, she found an old factory for $35,000, moved in during 1979, raised funds and oversaw the building of a new 200-seat mainstage theater in 1988.

Today the center, which also contains a commodious art gallery and other facilities, is worth $1.1 million. ETA is the only Black-owned, Black-managed arts facility in Chicago, and its theatrical activities are devoted exclusively to works by Black playwrights — usually six or seven major shows a season.

I saw its production of *Survival* written by Themba Ntinga, Seth Sibanda, Fana Kekana, Selaelo Maredi and Mahengu. The work is set in and around a South African prison under the recent harsh apartheid regime. It...calls for a good deal of singing, for music is one of the main ways by which inmates can survive their condition. Under Jerry Mofokeng's direction, all the roles were played by three actors — Robert Douglas, plus writers Kekana and Maredi.

The Black Ensemble Theater was founded in 1976 by Jackie Taylor, who remains its artistic director and leading actress. Besides its youth workshops and training program, the company, located in the Uptown Hull House, has mounted more than 50 plays. Scripts are specifically chosen to make a positive statement, to cross racial barriers and to educate as well as entertain.

For the third of its four productions this season, the troupe offered a revival of one of the milestones of Black theater, Philip Yordan's *Anna Lucasta*. Originally written about a Polish family, nobody would produce it. When refashioned and given to the American Negro Theatre in 1944, it ran for nearly a thousand performances on Broadway, becoming the first serious hit about Black life in the urban North. The New York cast included Hilda Simms, Canada Lee and Frederick O'Neal, and...the then-teenage Earle Hyman. A film version starred Eartha Kitt and Sammy Davis, Jr. Today the plot seems pretty implausible, but the show was a shocker when first staged.

The third Black troupe is the Chicago Theatre Company, founded in 1984 and currently headed by Kristin Anderson. A non-profit professional group, it had nothing on stage during my visit. Worth noting, however, is that two years ago it mounted a production of Boston playwright Lynda Patton's *Drink the Contents of This Vial*.

In addition to these groups, there are two important ones associated with a couple of the eight City Colleges. Val Gray Ward oversees the Kuumba Theatre which operates under the auspices of Malcolm X College ([with] an 87 percent Black enrollment); and Kai Elzabar and Virgil Sanner head The Performing Company, which is an arm of the Broadcasting, Speech and Theatre Department of Kennedy-King College (97 percent Black).

Several of Chicago's other companies intermittently orient their work toward the Black community.

**Abena Joan Brown, President of ETA Creative Arts Foundation, Chicago's oldest independent Black theater company.**

The multicultural Free Street Theater, started in 1969 by Patrick Henry who led it until his death in 1989, is an outreach group that creates original theater out of the experiences of local residents...It mounts from five to seven shows a season, some drawing heavily on Black performers.

The Victory Gardens Theater, founded in 1974, has five multi-ethnic productions a season in its 195-seat mainstage plus three shows in its 60-seat studio theater. It has done such Black plays as *Home*, *Master Harold and the Boys* and *The Colored Museum*. Black writer Charles Smith is currently playwright-in-residence. The company premiered his *Jelly Belly* and took it to New York [in conjunction with the New Federal Theater]. [Victory Gardens also] recently premiered his adaptation of Jean Toomer's classic, *Cane*.

The Off-Loop Theater Festival, begun in 1986, was in progress while I was in town. This year, there were six programs of plays offered by 19 participating Chicago companies. I saw four works but could not fit into my schedule the critically praised offering I most wanted to see. This

(continued on page 8)

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*Caldwell Titcomb is a professor emeritus of music at Brandeis University where he also taught drama criticism for many years. A charter member of the American Theatre Critics Association, he writes on theatre for **Bay State Banner**, Boston's Black newspaper.*

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## Chicago...

(continued from page 7)

was *Red Tango*, mounted by the Chicago Actors Ensemble, an "alternative" group dedicated to offbeat projects.

This troupe has done more than 30 shows in its six years at the Preston Bradley Center. *Red Tango* is a rock opera, with music by Tom Yore, which transplants Georg Büchner's famous 1837 German play *Woyzeck* to the townships of South Africa. It was performed by an all-Black cast with David Thibodeaux in the title role and Jennifer Ford as his ill-fated mistress, Marie.

The Body Politic Theatre, born in 1969, has emphasized British and Irish plays, but it did a Black play, *Takunda* by the aforementioned Charles Smith in 1987. The company's new head, Albert Pertalion, [chose] to wind up [last year's] five-play season...in his 192-seat theatre...by directing *Hi Hat Hattie!*, [a first work by Larry Parr] about Hattie McDaniel (1895-1952).

Although McDaniel is remembered as the first Black performer to win an Academy Award (in 1940 for *Gone With the Wind*), it is less often recalled that she started as a singer and vaudvillian, often billed as "the colored Sophie Tucker" and "the female Bert Williams." The first Black woman to sing on the radio,...she made her film debut in 1932, acting in more than 80 movies until 1949, usually as a mammy or maid.

The second longest-running show in town is *Do the White Thing*. Having opened in November 1989, it is currently ensconced at the Steppenwolf North Theatre. The production is written and performed by the duo of Aaron Freeman and Rob Kolson. Freeman, who hosts a public affairs program on Chicago television and has film and radio credits, is Black; Kolson, a former teacher and banker, is White. The show consists of satirical skits and songs with Kolson intermittently plunking a piano or strumming a guitar. The material is constantly updated to maintain freshness; the night I was there, the pair incorporated references to world events that had happened that very day.

**Rosalind Cash as the richest woman in the world in the Goodman Theatre production of *The Visit*.**

Finally, I want to call attention to two productions that reflect "non-traditional casting." One was at the Goodman Theatre, Chicago's oldest and largest resident enterprise (founded in 1925, its mainstage seats 683 and its studio theater holds 135). From time to time, it has mounted Black shows by Lorraine Hansberry (a native of Chicago), Wole Soyinka and August Wilson. The fourth of this season's five mainstage shows was Friedrich Duerenmatt's tragicomic *The Visit*, which had its American premiere in 1958 as the farewell vehicle for the celebrated acting team of Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne. In the play, the world's richest woman returns to her native town offering to pour a billion dollars into its bankrupt economy if the citizenry will kill the man who betrayed her in their youth. Five years ago, the Trinity Repertory Company in Providence staged *The Visit* inside the city's old railroad station and assigned the woman's role to its leading Black actress, Barbara Meek, with admirable results. At the Goodman, the 28-year old director, David Petrarca, in his mainstage debut, decided to follow Trinity's example by casting Black actress Rosalind Cash as the vengeful billionaire...and four Black actors provided support in small roles.

The Wisdom Bridge Theatre, founded in 1974, mounts four major productions each season. The third offering this year was the largest in its history — employing a cast of 20 plus seven musicians. The project was F. Scott Fitzgerald's famous 1925 novel, *The Great Gatsby*, adapted and directed by a young Englishman, John Carlile. The story takes place among New York's high society, and centers on Jay Gatsby, who, craving status, has mysteriously acquired great wealth and gives lavish parties. For the title role, Carlile chose Black actor Harry J. Lennix (who recently appeared in Robert Townsend's latest movie, *The Five Heartbeats*). "My being Black, if anything, will accent or point our the fact Gatsby is an outsider," says Lennix. "He is someone who, through hard work, has managed to gain a certain amount of influence, power and money. But he still is never really accepted by people with classist and racist views."

It seems clear that Chicago is an unusually fertile environment for Blacks who want to work in the theater. I should add that, in a period when funding for the Massachusetts Cultural Council [among many others] is being brutally curtailed, almost all the activity ...mentioned here, enjoyed considerable support from the city, the state and the federal government.●

*This article was excerpted from "Chicago Theater Scene Has Wealth of Black Stagecraft," published by Bay State Banner, 1991.*

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The Arts

The New York Times

# Lincoln Center Programming: Rough Terrain

12/3/92

By [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

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THE NEW YORK

# Theater in Review

Problems from two countries: America's presented in a trilogy, South Africa's in songs, stories and chants.

### American Lesion

*Playground Theater*
*230 East Ninth Street*
*East Village*

A play in three parts by Tom Gilroy; production design by [illegible]; lighting by [illegible]; costumes by [illegible]; produced by Fernando Gomez; stage manager, [illegible]; [illegible]; sound by [illegible]. Presented by Machine Full.

[illegible], directed by Lili Taylor.
WITH: Tom Gilroy, Fernando Gomez and Chris Rossi

[illegible], directed by Mark Williams.
WITH: Tom Esposito and John Ventimiglia

[illegible], directed by Michael Imperioli.
WITH: Steve Mark Friedman and Maggie Low

The future of Western civilization and in particular the English language, is decidedly bleak in "American Lesion," three thematically related one-act plays by Tom Gilroy. "Nothing works," as a bored and frustrated husband says in the last of the short pieces. This is the way the world ends, with [illegible] and whimpers.

Back in the 1960's, Jean-Claude van Itallie took a darkly comic approach to related dramatic territory in "America Hurrah." Mr. Gilroy's efforts [illegible] have the imagination of van Itallie's work. But there is a [illegible], especially in the playwright's [illegible] deconstruction of [illegible] and rites of behavior. [illegible], both three-play [illegible] Americana begin with an [illegible]. With Mr. Gilroy, the questioning takes place in an [illegible] office where a young man is applying for an unidentified position in an unspecified organization. There are hints in the air that this could be a [illegible] group. As the interviewer (played by Mr. Gilroy) [illegible] the applicant (Chris Rossi), the playwright [illegible] the dialogue with clichés and catch phrases. It is a [illegible] of verbiage without [illegible].

In the second and more chilling play, a father visits a police station and tries to determine the [illegible] of his son who has been arrested for the crime [illegible] labeled ETT.25. As [illegible] performed by Tom Esposito and John Ventimiglia, a father's helplessness is matched with a policeman's willfulness in being as unresponsive as possible.

The final play [illegible] and ground as a husband and wife try to reawaken their spent passion through acts of fantasy. Nothing works as Maggie Low and Steven Mark Friedman move from seduction to infantilism. When each game has run its course, one or the other proclaims "America!" meaning cease and try a new erotic tactic. The symbolism of this sign-off can be freely interpreted.

As directed by Lili Taylor, Mark Williams and Michael Imperioli and as performed by actors in the Machine Full company, each play has a surge of energy. But the playwright does not come to terms with what he evidently regards as a widespread and harmful case of [illegible] disease.

*MEL GUSSOW*

Thuli Dumakude performing in the one-woman show "Buya Afr

### Buya Africa

*John Houseman Theater*
*450 West 42d Street*
*Clinton*

Musical director, Enoch; musician, Valerie Naranjo; stage manager, [illegible]; house manager, [illegible]. Presented by [illegible] Theatrical Management.

WITH: Thuli Dumakude

In "Buya Africa," her spirited one-woman show of songs, stories and chants, Thuli Dumakude, a singer and actress of formidable charm and vitality, offers an impressionistic portrait of the changing black South African mood. Partly autobiographical and partly told in the voices of others, the show presents a very rough chronicle of the struggle against apartheid as experienced by eve black South Africans. The storie seasoned with informative tid South African folklore.

Ms. Dumakude, who is best-k for her 1980 performance Off B way in "Poppie Nongena," is a erful singer whose style fuses a tive folk-pop lullaby with the c and shivering cries of traditional chants. Like the best folk-gospel ers, she conveys equal measure sorrow and resilience in a rich trating alto that maintains a st steady emotional current.

The show's eight songs include ditional folk and sacred materi well as folk-flavored pop song Welcome Msomi. They have arranged by a gifted American instrumentalist named Enoch, style that seamlessly fuses South rican mbaqanga with the sm softer American folk-rock of the ly 1970's. Enoch, who plays the gu for much of the show, is joined Valerie Naranjo, a talented perc sionist who gives the material impressive textural depth and rhy mic flow.

The music in "Buya Africa" is engaging that it tends to outweigh Dumakude's stories, whose narrat range from an impoverished 5-ye old girl to a teacher who still mou students shot to death during an a apartheid protest in June 1976.

One story describes the courtu rituals and eventual marriage young Zulu woman whose husb leaves her for months at a time work hard in a gold mine. The mo and most vivid vignette is a woma description of what it felt like w she and her neighbors were orde by the Government to destroy th own homes and relocate to a de nated homeland area. Those who not comply watched helplessly their homes were bulldozed.

"Buya Africa" becomes more ce bratory and informal as it goes alo A discussion of the traditional So African song that Pete Seeger and Weavers popularized in 1952 und the title "Wimoweh" (and that la became the 1961 pop hit, "The Li Sleeps Tonight") leads into an eas easy sing-along. Ms. Dumakude al teaches what she calls "a lesson language," in which the audien learns numerous words and phras that involve elaborate clicks of t tongue on the roof of the mouth.

The show ends on an infectious upbeat note as Ms. Dumakude lea her fellow performers and the

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The Arts

The New York Times

# At the Mon[illegible]ude Budgetary In[illegible]usion

[illegible] leading opera company [illegible] with economic realities

Continued on Page C[illegible]

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# In Italy, the Arts Are Schooled for Scandal

By ALAN COWELL

ROME

IN A SEASON OF GLOOM AND UNCERTAINTY provoked by a traumatic corruption scandal, Italians are finding [illegible] at every creative [illegible] in the cinema, on television, [illegible] and in the theater. Sometimes, all the [illegible] can do is laugh — at themselves, [illegible] and their leaders — possibly to [illegible] from what seems to be an [illegible] bribe.

[illegible] has indeed been [illegible] what Italians call "Tangentopoli," [illegible] translates literally as "Bribe [illegible]" and describes the past 14 months of [illegible] of bribes and kickbacks among [illegible] business and political elite.

In some ways, the reaction is comparable [illegible] Watergate in the United States [illegible] books and a movie ("All the President's Men") but became the butt of [illegible]

[illegible] corruption [illegible] grist for [illegible] screen.

[illegible] and stand-up comics. In Italy, [illegible] the material reflects long-held [illegible]

[illegible] two new movies — Margarethe [illegible]'s "Long Silence" and Daniele [illegible] "Coming Storm" — opened [illegible] official corruption.

"Long Silence" is a somber and [illegible] about a judge, his wife and [illegible] who are murdered as they [illegible] a massive bribery scandal. [illegible] largely unfavorable reviews [illegible]

[illegible] "Coming Storm" — about a [illegible] got [illegible] reviews, with [illegible] by Mr. Lucchetti.

[illegible] productions [illegible] a Little [illegible]

In "The Long Silence," Carla Gravina [illegible] Jacques Perrin, [illegible]

[illegible] a satire of the country's [illegible] political [illegible] regularly attracts 10 million viewers — and [illegible] the nation's [illegible]

The [illegible] is the biggest scandal in postwar Europe, in which hundreds of [illegible] businessmen are being [illegible] about the systematic payment of bribes in return for public-works contracts. The exposure [illegible] changed hands [illegible] billions of dollars. No political party or large corporation — private or state-run — has remained unscathed. The way Italians have focused [illegible] on the doings and undoings of their leaders says a great deal about their reaction [illegible]

[illegible] a long [illegible] of comedy in Italy," said [illegible] Lucchetti, director of "The Coming Storm." "The Italian public takes [illegible] "political" movies tend to follow the line of one party or another. By contrast," he said, "comedy is liberation."

Mr. Lucchetti began filming "The Coming Storm" in 1991, before the [illegible] bribery scandal exploded but at a time when the population was showing signs of dissatisfaction with the political elite. The film is not specifically about Tangentopoli, he said, although it does revolve around [illegible] corruption. Rather, he said, it "talks about the strangeness of this country, about odd [illegible] behavior that does not have any rules. It's a film that tells of the confusion that all of us in Italy have at the moment."

In Ms. von Trotta's "Long Silence," the mood is anything but comic. The [illegible] drama [illegible] reflection of last year's [illegible] slaying of the country's top [illegible] anti-Mafia investigators in Palermo, Sicily. The film is the first to [illegible] reveal a version of events uncomfortably [illegible]

[illegible] based on impersonations of leading politicians. In [illegible] when Mr. Pinelli [illegible]

[illegible] In Italy these days, may be that [illegible]

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# Frederic Warriner, 76, an Actor Who Specialized in Shakespeare

By GLENN COLLINS

Frederic Warriner, a versatile character actor on the New York stage who specialized in Shakespeare and Shaw, died on Tuesday at Middlesex Memorial Hospital in Middletown, Conn. He was 76 years old and lived in Old Saybrook, Conn.

He died of a brain hemorrhage, said a friend, Tom Martin.

In May 1981, Mr. Warriner played the Rev. O. C. Soames in "Getting Married," for which he received the Clarence Derwent Award.

In other Broadway productions, he appeared as Stogumber in "St. Joan," starring Uta Hagen (1951); Salvatore in "The Wayward Saint" (1955); Major Domo in "Caligula" (1960); Stephen Undershaft in "Major Barbara," starring Charles Laughton (1956), and the landlord in "Time Remembered," starring Helen Hayes (1957).

### In the New York Shakespeare Festival

Among his many appearances at the New York Shakespeare Festival, Mr. Warriner played Lucio in the 1960 production of "Measure for Measure," Corbaccio in "Volpone" in 1967 and the Old Man and the Apothecary in "Romeo and Juliet" in 1968. He also played Friar Laurence and Antonio in "Two Gentlemen of Verona" both at the Delacorte Theater in July 1971 and when the play moved to Broadway later that year.

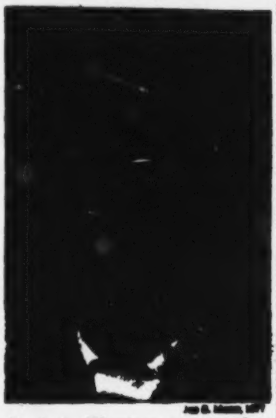
Mr. Warriner was born on June 2, 1914, in Pasadena, Calif., was a graduate of Pasadena City College and for five years performed as a member of the Pasadena Community Playhouse.

In World War II, Mr. Warriner served in the Army.

Through the years, he performed with the Barter Theater in Virginia, the Wellesley Group 20 in Massachusetts, the American Shakespeare Festival Theater in Connecticut and the Phoenix Theater Company in New York City. He also toured with many national productions, and from July to December 1962 appeared as Sowerberry in the original national company of "Oliver." And in 1977, he won favorable notices for his role as Shooter O'Rourke in "Mummer's End," at the Folger Theater in Washington.

His marriage to the actress and playwright Elinor Wright ended in divorce in the early 1950's.

There are no survivors.



Frederic Warriner in the play, "Mummer's End."

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Mr. Cunningham became chairman of the board in 1967. He held the two most powerful positions at the company — chairman and president — until 1970, when he resigned as president. He gave up the chairmanship in 1972, remaining a director and a member of various board committees.

Mr. Cunningham was born on a farm in Home Camp, Pa. He left Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, after his sophomore year to take a job as a reporter at the Harrisburgh Patriot. A year later he started out in Kmart's management training program in Lynchburgh, Va. He became a store manager in 1946, and a district manager in 1947.

He is survived by his wife, the former Margaret Diefendorf; three daughters, Jane Harrington, Sally Downey and Ann Gilmer; a brother, Norman; three sisters, Virginia, Mabel Graham and Nellie Kauffman; and grandchildren.

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## Deaths

[illegible]

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# Charles W. Charny, 90, Urologist Who Led Study of Male Infertility

By WOLFGANG SAXON

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# Head of Endowment For the Humanities Plans to Step Down

12/3/92 NYT

By GLENN COLLINS

Lynne V. Cheney, the chairwoman of the National Endowment for the Humanities, plans to resign on Jan. 20, when the Clinton Administration takes office.

Ms. Cheney announced her departure in a letter to her staff on Tuesday, in which she said that "this period of transition is a fitting time for me to move on to other things." She has served as the chairwoman for six and a half years, and will be leaving 16 months before the end of her second four-year term.

"I had a sense that I wasn't going to be as much in charge of the agenda as I have been," Ms. Cheney said in an interview yesterday. "I felt, instinctively, that this was the right time to go."

### Deputy to Take Over

The 51-year-old Ms. Cheney said her deputy chairwoman, Dr. Celeste Colgan, would serve as acting chairwoman until the new President nominates a successor.

Ms. Cheney, who has been an outspoken critic of "political correctness," said in her letter that she hoped "the endowment will remain a strong advocate of the idea that the university is a place where ideas should clash and compete."

Ms. Cheney said in the interview that she applauded scholars' "new understanding of the contributions of minorities and women," but said that "political agendas should never take the place of the pursuit of truth as the object of education." "Mine was not a fight against anyone, but an advocacy of free speech," she said.

Although some critics had suggested that she had politicized grant making, Ms. Cheney said the charges were "ludicrous," adding that "the range of applications funding during my tenure proves that it is impossible to say that there was an ideological agenda here."

### On an Education Role

Ms. Cheney said she was proudest of programs during her tenure that had expanded the mandate of the endowment by "broadening humanities education in the schools." She added that she was also proud of the endowment's support for the "parallel school" concept, the notion that libraries, museums, public television stations and other institutions make up an informal system of education. The best example of that, she said, was the endowment's financing of "The Civil War," the public-television series by Ken Burns.

She says she wants to write a book exploring the impact of American intellectual life on society, and is looking for a house in Jackson, Wyo., with her husband, Dick Cheney, the outgoing Secretary of Defense.

Although Ms. Cheney insisted that her political skills were "terribly modest," her connections in the Reagan and Bush Administrations and her administrative adroitness enabled her to steer clear of much of the furor that embroiled the National Endowment for the Arts in recent years. She was also able to raise the humanities endowment's budget to $177 million from the $136 million when she took over in May 1986.

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# Romeo and Juliet

by

William Shakespeare

## A Multicultural Approach

the Huntington Theatre Company

*In residence at Boston University*

# A Teaching Guide

to

# *Romeo and Juliet*

by William Shakespeare

Developed and Prepared by

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## Acknowledgements

As teachers, we share and borrow ideas from each other. The following educators and colleagues contributed ideas and inspiration to this teacher guide:

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# Introduction

Faced with increased diversity among our students, a required core curriculum, and the painful reality that our education system continues to fail students of nondominant cultures, teachers are challenged daily to meet the needs of students who not only feel disenfranchised from America's mainstream, but are also faced with poverty, hunger, racism, socio-economic discrimination and violence. How then does one teach these same students *Romeo and Juliet* by Shakespeare, a 16th century piece that must seem eons removed from their lives? How does one make Shakespeare accessible to students who often have low self-esteem, have been given few expectations and suffer from a lack of challenge in their schools?

Although individual teachers cannot rid the world of poverty, hunger, racism and violence single-handedly, a multicultural approach to *Romeo and Juliet* can help increase understanding and tolerance while helping all students raise expectations for themselves by increasing success and self-esteem.

This approach deals with methodology that accommodates learning styles and cultural differences, as well as establishes accessibility and high expectations for all students. It utilizes a style of reflective thinking, self-actuating learning, and the exploration of the commonality of the human condition (the latter something theatre readily lends itself to). The multicultural approach fosters team work and a sense of camaraderie in the classroom. It eliminates competition and perceived external achievement, and encourages creativity and activity. At the same time, it offers problem solving and team work as a means to learning. By sharing personal reactions to literature and making connections to their own lives and culture, students foster intercultural understanding which breaks down prejudices and increases tolerance.

To accomplish these goals of multicultural education, this unit on *Romeo and Juliet* will utilize the following methodology:

1) The classroom will be arranged like an Elizabethan theatre: desks on three sides. This way students can see each other during discussions, there is no "back of the room" for students to hide; and the three sided thrust approach more readily solicits feedback and involvement because everyone is close to the learning and teaching action.

2) Energy and structured noise is encouraged and the raising of hands to give the "right" answer diminished.

3) Cooperative learning teams are established throughout the unit to encourage small group activity and self-actuating learning. This methodology also helps break down intercultural barriers and fosters tolerance, leadership and cooperation. At the same time, small heterogeneous groups encourage shy students to participate more easily, advanced students to tutor others in the group, and energetic students to focus their energies. In addition, creativity and group problem solving become a conduit for learning.

4) Creative hands-on activities afford students tactile and visual learning, as well as physical and verbal involvement. At the same time, student barriers to learning diminish so that all students feel equal access to the material.

5) Reflective and conceptual thinking is encouraged in small and large group discussions, as well as through journal writing. The use of open ended questions and encouragement of connecting themes and issues to students' lives recognize cultural differences.

6) Creative exercises, guided reading questions, and critical reading questions assist students in developing comprehensive skills and analytical thinking skills that increase success in inferential comprehension which leads to reading success and thus raises student expectation and self-esteem.

7) Choices in a variety of writing assignments and other creative activities allow for students to succeed on many levels and to explore their creative potential.

8) By examining other works with similar themes, conflicts and issues, students can begin to recognize the common humanity we all share.

The guide is divided into several parts. Each part contains a rationale, objectives, lesson plans, suggested time line and an evaluative process. The teacher is encouraged to pick and choose, adapt and change, and add to any portion of the guide to meet the preferences and needs of individual classes and students.

Choosing a text can be key to a unit on Shakespeare. There are several out there. I have found that those with larger print and word and historical references opposite the lines rather than at the bottom of the page to be most useful. The Longman Study Text for *Romeo and Juliet* was used to develop this teacher guide. Some of the guided reading questions are from that text. (Shakespeare, William. *Romeo and Juliet*. Edited by Paul Cheetham, with additional notes and study questions by Neil King, personal essay by Irving Wardle. Hong Kong: Longman, 1987.)

# *Romeo and Juliet*
# A Multicultural Approach

## Description of the Unit

This unit is appropriate for inner city or suburban students, heterogeneously or homogeneously grouped, grades 8-12. It is designed for a class of approximately 25 students, but may be adapted according to class size.

Before beginning this unit on *Romeo and Juliet*, arrange the classroom as a thrust stage, desks on three sides. This not only places them in the atmosphere of Elizabethan theatre where they can participate in and observe class from that vantage point, but also allows for advantageous participation.

This approach requires an open and risk-taking environment. To help create this atmosphere, go through some trust exercises and creative dramatics exercises with your class. There are several helpful books readily available in libraries or bookstores.

## Part I: Turning On

### Day One

**Rationale**

So often students psych themselves down about Shakespeare. They think he is boring and difficult to read. Part I attempts to break down the barriers to prepare students for the study of *Romeo and Juliet* and to help students to feel Shakespeare is accessible to them. Later in the unit there will be other exercises that help students deal with the language of Shakespeare before beginning the reading of *Romeo and Juliet.*

**Goals/Objectives**

Students will

1) share their negative (and positive) feelings about Shakespeare,

2) break down some barriers they have that prevent them from understanding and developing an interest in Shakespeare,

3) develop an enthusiasm and interest in studying Shakespeare,

**Methodology**

The spirit of this lesson is fun and somewhat tongue-in-cheek.

a) Using the overhead projector, project the word *Shakespeare* on the screen.

b) Ask students what they think of when they see this word. Encourage them to be honest about their feelings. Write their answers on the board. You will most likely get such answers as boring, difficult, guys in tights, big words, etc. You might even get some positive responses.

c) Ask students to explain why they contributed certain words to the list. Be sympathetic with their reasons.

d) Project the words *Sex!, Violence!, Passion!* on the screen. Tell the students you noticed that these words did not appear on their list (If they do appear on the list, adapt accordingly). Explain that the Elizabethan audience was not much different from today's in their taste for what is entertaining. Point out that Shakespeare's characters are frequently violent and lusting after someone, and they are above all passionate. Explain that Shakespeare's characters are not passive: they love, hate, laugh, connive, or whatever it may be, with the utmost passion. His characters live life to the fullest.

e) Illustrate your point by describing plots and characters from your favorite Shakespeare plays. Prepare overlays that include the title and 2-5 principal characters so that it will be easier for your students to keep track of who is who while you tell the story.

Ask students what they know about the plays and characters as you show each one on the screen before you relate it to your point.

For example:

*Othello*

Othello
Desdemona
Iago

Describe their characters, their passions, their jealousies, their deaths.

*King Lear*

Lear
Goneril
Regan
Edmund

Describe the love triangle of Goneril, Regan, Edmund and the cruelty the daughters reap upon Lear. Point out how many dead bodies there are on the stage at the end of the play. You might do this with 2-4 plays.

f) Tell your students that they will be studying one of Shakespeare's plays for the next few weeks, *Romeo and Juliet*. Point out that in order to appreciate and understand the play, it is important to learn something about the times and culture in which it would have been performed. You might recall other works they have studied in which learning about the background helped them understand the piece. Explain that they will be divided into teams to find out about Shakespeare and his time.

**Evaluation of Part I**
Observation of students' attention and enthusiasm. Simply, the room should be filled with laughter and readiness to share responses.

## Part II: Cooperative Learning Teams for Background Exploration

### Rationale

This part divides the students into cooperative learning teams in which they will work throughout the 4-6 week unit. Teams will allow for students to be more active and creative in their own learning. Working in teams will also give opportunity for students to develop friendships outside their "cliques," and thus break down cultural barriers. Group work also facilitates peer teaching, develops leadership and cooperative skills, and accommodates most students' learning styles. In addition, preparing and presenting the team's project allows students the opportunities to develop presentational skills and self-esteem. At the same time students develop organizational skills by writing the presentation and connecting ideas through participating in sections of the presentation.

### Goals/Objectives

Students will

1) become acquainted with members of their team,

2) understand the guidelines for their presentation,

3) become familiar with their topic requirements,

4) strategize for their team's project.

### Methodology

a) Divide the students into cooperative learning teams consisting of 5 members each. Explain to them that these are the teams they will work in throughout the study of *Romeo and Juliet*. The teacher assigns the teams. Students do not pick their teammates; otherwise they would be with their friends. The teams should be heterogeneously mixed, taking into account gender, ethnicity, socio-economics, ability, and personality (eg., natural leaders, shy students, talkative students).

b) Pass out "Team Process" handouts that describe the responsibilities and strategies of the team work (See handout in appendix). Explain each point of the team process. Allow students a few minutes to complete the first two activities of the Team Process Guidelines. This might take the rest of the period. Tell them that tomorrow they will go over the project presentation guidelines and receive their first assignment.

## Day Two
## Beginning the Group Project

a) Handout the presentation guidelines (See appendix for handout) and go over it with the class. Encourage questions and tell them to keep presentation guidelines in mind as they explore their topics. You may want to go over all the handouts for presentations so students are aware of what will be expected later on. Then go over each individually as the step for each approaches.

b) Briefly review the use of the library, citing sources and areas of the library to use: card catalogue, film strips, encyclopedias, resource area, etc.

c) Hand out the first team project assignment, which is to find out about some aspect of Elizabethan culture, Shakespeare's life, or elements of Elizabethan theatre. Each team receives a set of questions to answer while exploring their topic. (Topic assignment handouts are in the appendix).

d) For the remainder of the period, allow students to strategize for their next meeting.

## Days Three to Five
## Exploring the Topic

### Goals/Objectives
Students will

1) use sources in the library to explore the team's topic,

2) select appropriate information to answer questions pertaining to their topic,

3) share information with the other team members,

4) exhibit responsibility by fulfilling their roles with the team process.

### Methodology
a) Remind students to refer to the Team Process handout to remind them of the steps they should be following.

b) Students spend the next three days in the media center/school library to gather information. If your school does not have the necessary resources, bring in books from other libraries for the students to use. You will need to check out your school's library before beginning this part of the unit. Encourage students to visit local libraries or bring resources from home.

If your students have easy access to outside libraries (e.g., use of cars, in walking distance to local libraries, etc.), you might require them to visit other libraries to take out sources to bring to class to work out of. You might also take the class to the local library as a field trip.

c) The teacher should spend time with each group, guiding them to appropriate sources, advising them on strategies for taking notes, helping them focus when necessary, and checking that the information they have gathered each day and evening as homework is appropriate for their topic. Discuss the topics with each of them.

## Days Six to Seven
## Preparing the Presentation

### Goals/Objectives

Students will

1) organize their presentation,

2) prepare appropriate visuals,

3) rehearse their presentation.

### Methodology

a) Go over the presentation guidelines again. They will make more sense to the students now that they have the information for their presentation. Point out that they will need to work on the presentation materials and practice the presentation outside of class time.

b) Hand out the presentation observation sheets (See appendix for sample). Explain to your students that these are the aspects of their presentations they will be graded on. Point out that the audience will also fill in these sheets for the presentation.

c) Have the teams draw numbers to determine the order of the presentations.

d) Allow students time to prepare for their presentations and provide them with resources for visuals (e.g., poster board, markers, cardboard, etc.).

## Days Eight to Eleven
## Team Presentations

### Goals/Objectives

Students will

1) participate in their team's presentation,

2) evaluate each other's presentations,

3) evaluate the critiques by others of their presentation,

4) evaluate their individual contribution to their team's process,

5) take notes on the content of other teams' presentations.

### Methodology

a) Pass out the Presentation Evaluation sheets (copy in appendix). Review the points with the class. Explain that the audience will also fill out these forms for peer feedback. Point out that following each presentation will be a verbal critique. Explain the ground rules: 1) critiques begin with positive comments (What did you like about the presentation, what did you learn, what were the strong points?), 2) any criticism must include ways to improve (e.g., was difficult to hear: think of speaking to the person in the back of the room; needed better eye contact: look over the top of people's heads.)

b) Point out that there will be a follow-up activity to each presentation. Pass out the Follow-up Activity Sheet (copy in appendix) and go over it with the class. Point out that at the beginning of the next two classes, teams who presented the day before will go over and grade the half pages while the teams who will be presenting meet for last minute preparation. The questions the teams have chosen from the papers given them will be answered the following day.

c) Have two groups present the first day, two the second, one the third. Tell students they are to take notes of the contents of each presentation and will be responsible for knowing that content.

d) Fill out observation forms immediately following each presentation. Follow this up with 3-5 minutes of verbal critiques.

e) Each team answers three follow-up questions.

f) Assign as homework their self-evaluation as explained in the Follow-up Activity Sheet. This will be collected after meeting with their teams to share their separate evaluations during the next class.

**Day Eleven**
**Finishing the Evaluation Process**

Methodology

a) Follow-up any team evaluations if needed.

b) Allow teams to complete any follow-up activities, e.g., complete unanswered questions by other teams.

c) Allow students time to share their self-evaluations with their teams and discuss their team process. The teacher should float among teams to observe evaluations. Collect the self-evaluation sheets at the end of the period.

Evaluation of Part II

Observation of student focus, contribution and responsibility during the project work in the library and while preparing the presentation; scoring of the presentations; student self-evaluations; observation of student response to presentations; student write-ups of the other teams' presentation; team notes; and team outline.

## Part III: Relevancy: Examining the Issues

**Days Twelve to Fourteen**

**Goals/Objectives**
Students will

1) examine an issue of the play in small groups,

2) examine other issues of the play with the class,

3) consider the relevance a Shakespeare play could hold for them,

4) share cultural values,

5) build understanding of the commonality of the human condition.

**Methodology**
a) Point out that now that they are familiar with Shakespeare, his times and the theatre, they are about to begin *Romeo and Juliet*. Tell them that *Romeo and Juliet* is a story about teenagers, love, culture clashes and suicide, and speaks clearly to young people, even hundreds of years later. Issues to be discussed deal with love, culture clashes, violence in the streets and in families, defiance, and suicide. Each issue will be represented by a quotation from *Romeo and Juliet*.

b) The lesson begins with asking students to have journals ready (a process they are used to). Each student receives an index card with one of the following quotes, divided equally among quotes and distributed randomly to students:

> "What talk of peace? I hate the word
> As I hate hell, all Montagues, and thee."
>
> "With love's light wings did I o'erperch these walls,
> For stoney limits can not hold love out."
>
> "Some twenty of them fought in this black style."
>
> "I pray would tell my lord and father, madame,
> I will not marry yet; and when I do, I swear
> It shall be Romeo not Paris."
>
> "I long to die "

c) Have students free write for two minutes in response to the line.

d) Next have them find their group members, those with the same line.

e) For three minutes have them share their responses about the line. All members must contribute.

f) Students then create a body sculpture that pictures an agreed upon interpretation. The picture may move, but must end in a freeze frame. The only line spoken is the given line. Every member must be involved in the picture.

g) Groups present their pictures one at a time. After each group presents theirs, the "audience" answers the question, "What do you see?" This allows for all levels of observation and interpretation. Since the room is set up as a thrust stage, with some of the audience sitting in the pit area and some in the perimeter desks, it lends opportunity to discuss similarities to the Globe set up. Encourage students to point out other similarities to Elizabethan performance. Point out how *Romeo and Juliet* is a story that speaks to us today, much as their sculpture spoke to us.

h) Each group is then given a role play (samples in appendix) that accompanies their quote. Give the groups ten minutes to work on the role play; or, depending on time, pass out the role plays for students to think about for the next day. The next day have students meet with their groups to plan the role play. Each group then performs the scene for the class. After each scene, allow the students participating to share how they felt and what they think was going on in the situation. Finally, open the role play up for discussion with the class as a whole, utilizing some of the questions on the role play sheet. The students who planned the role play are given the first opportunity to answer each question.

i) Students are then given a question sheet with each quotation as a heading to answer for homework (See appendix for handout of issue questions).

j) The next day, have students discuss the issues with their groups. The teacher should rotate from group to group to encourage participation and help students focus. Encourage them to use their homework answers to begin the discussion.

k) Collect the papers at the end of the period. Read them before the next class to become familiar with student views in order to moderate the class discussion on the issues.

l) During the next class, discuss each issue with the class having the groups who chose that issue share their notes. Encourage other groups to also participate in the discussion. The discussion might continue the next class period.

m) Point out that these issues are dealt with in *Romeo and Juliet* and that they should keep them in mind while reading the play.

## Evaluation of Part III

Observation of student contribution to discussion, sculpture and role play; writte responses to quotations and issue questions.

## Part IV: It's Just Words

### Day Fifteen

**Rationale**
The language of Shakespeare can be incredibly intimidating to students. This next part of the unit attempts to break down the barriers to the language of Shakespeare. After all, they are "just words". In addition, students will have an opportunity to examine words closely and to appreciate the power of words.

**Goals/Objectives**
Students will

1) become actively involved in the language of Shakespeare by learning the sonnet form,

2) participate physically in the sonnet form,

3) understand the premise/exposition of the opening prologue,

4) begin critical reading of the text.

Materials:

1. List of words from the prologue. The teacher makes a list that contains one word from each line of the prologue. They should consist of all capital letters with a fairly large font, well spaced to allow for each word to be cut into a shape. (Suggested words: dignity, fatal, star-crossed, piteous, grudge, unclean, fair, strife, fearful, rage, remove, traffic, mend.)

2. Scissors

3. Each line of the sonnet should be typed on individual strips of paper with the line number written on the back.

**Methodology**
a) Have students sit in a circle on the floor. Pass out the sheets of words. Tell students these are just words, so they should cut them into shapes. Side coach: "Throw the words in the air to land near you. Pick up a word and stare at it; say it over and over in a voice that catches the essence of the word. Try saying the word in different voices and pitches. (Students should be doing this all at once, so no one is center stage or being watched.) Move to the next word." (Side coaching is primarily walking around the outside of the circle. Do this for several

words.) Have students share their experience. What was their favorite word? Why? What did they learn about the word?

b) Pass out the single lines. Each student receives a line. Some students will have the same line since there will usually be more than fourteen students in a class. Have them stand with those who have the same line. Tell them to decide on an interpretation of the line, giving it some sort of dramatic and emotional interpretation. Encourage them to do something physical with the line. Allow a few minutes to rehearse their interpretation. Have each group or individual present their lines in no particular order.

c) Place the students physically in order of the number of their lines, creating the structure of the sonnet. This should be done in a square of 4 lines, 4 lines, 4 lines, 2 lines. Now have them say each line in order of the numbers on the back of the slip of paper they are written on, using the same interpretation they had presented previously. Point out that they have just performed the prologue to *Romeo and Juliet.*

d) Have them take their seats and pass out copies of the prologue. Ask students to identify elements of the sonnet. Have them determine the expositional points of the prologue, e.g., two families of equal social stature hold an ongoing grudge/hatred for each other. One young member from each household falls in love with the other. The children die. The parents stop the grudge. The play is two hours long.

## Evaluation of Part IV

Observation of student enthusiasm and participation, analysis of student perception of expositional elements of the prologue.

## Part V: The Actions the Word

### Day Sixteen

**Rationale**

Once students' barriers to the language have been dissolved, students still need assistance in using their imaginations and analytical thinking skills to "hear" the words and "visualize" the action. It is necessary that students understand that drama, and any piece of literature for that matter, is open to interpretation and that the more imagination and personal interpretation they use while reading, the more enjoyment they will sustain. This will allow immediate accessibility to the piece to students, for each of their ideas and interpretations will be valued.

**Goals/Objectives**

Students will

1) examine a scene in detail: use of language, character, motivation, action,

2) use their imaginations to direct actions and interpretation.

**Methodology**

a) Have the students read Act I, Scene 1 (approximately 12 pages) for tomorrow. Explain that the guided reading questions will give them practice at applying what they learned today. Ask them to answer 10 of the following questions while reading:

1. Who are Sampson and Gregory? What impression do we form of Sampson and Gregory, particularly as their language becomes more obscenely suggestive? Why do you think Shakespeare begins the scene with these lower members of the Capulet household?

2. Puns (Go for this question. Don't be afraid of it)
   a. Key words: coals, colliers, cholar, collar.
   What does each word mean and how do they work as a play on words (pun) in lines 1-4?

   b. What are the various meanings of "move/moved" in lines 5-10? How do they contribute to the punning?

   c. What does "dog" in line 7 refer to?

   d. In lines 11-16, "the wall" is referred to five times. What does each refer to?

   e. In lines 11-25 ("I will take the wall . . . or their maidenheads"), Shakespeare refers to maids and finally maidenhood. What is he insinuating here? It goes along with "the wall" idea.

f. What is the double meaning of "Draw thy tool" in line 30?

3. In what ways may it be visually established that Abraham and the servant are of an opposing force. The key to this is in line 32 when Sampson says "My naked weapon is out." What does this indicate he has done?

4. What does "bite my thumb" mean in line 40? What would you have an actor do to interpret this line?

5. An "aside" in Shakespeare refers to characters speaking in a stage whisper to each other or the audience so the other characters on stage can't hear them. Why do Sampson and Gregory speak in asides in lines 45-46?

6. Why dies Benvolio first draw his sword? What does this tell us about his character?

7. The conversation between the servants has been in prose. When Benvolio and Tybalt enter, they immediately speak in blank (non-rhyming) verse which consists of ten syllables to the line, with (normally) five stresses in each line. What is the effect of this change?

8. What are our first impressions of Tybalt?

9. What conclusions can we draw from the officer's cries in lines 70-71? How is this bourne out by what the Prince says in lines 79-101?

10. The reactions of Capulet and Montague to the brawl seem almost identical. What are their reactions? Their wives, however, appear to have some difference in their reactions. What impression, however sketchy, can we form of Lady Capulet and Lady Montague from lines 74 and 78 respectively?

11. What does the Prince say the punishment for disturbing the peace again will be? What does this say about the seriousness of this feud? How does it foreshadow?

12. The lines between the departure of the Prince and the entry of Romeo act as a bridge between the two events. What is Shakespeare trying to do before introducing Romeo? What atmosphere does he want to establish? What do we learn from Romeo in these lines? How does this relate to what has happened until now?

13. Romeo's speech, lines 169-180 ("Alas that love . . . Dost thou not laugh?"), is full of confusion and contradictory expressions (oxymorons), such as "loving hate," "heavy lightness," "cold fire." Find some more of these expressions in the speech. What does this tell us about his state of mind?

14. Why do you think Shakespeare shows Romeo "in love" with Rosaline at the beginning of the play? Do you think he is earnest or merely playing at being in love? What makes you think so? What indications are there in lines 206-222 ("Well, in that hit you miss . . . live to tell it now") that it is not love, but sex that Romeo requires from Rosaline? What does Benvolio suggest Romeo do to forget Rosaline?

15. There is a play on the word "sad/sadness" in lines 197-202. Explain these meanings.

All students do the following:

List at least 5 lines from the scene that indicate violence or being prone to violence.

b) As a class, have students discuss/analyze Act I, scene 1. Start with Sampson and Gregory. Ask two students to play the scene in various ways as the other students discuss the scene and thus direct them. Ask questions and encourage students to determine actions, e.g., Who are they? (Possibility -- 3 Stooges) What are they trying to do in the scene? (Top each other with their humor.) What else can you tell about them (cocky, silly, ignorant, etc.)?

Once these questions are answered, have the two volunteers act out lines 1-40 in several different ways with the class/audience giving them various directions on how to use their voice, face, bodies, movement, props. (You might rotate different students in and out of the roles.)

For example, give each of them a sword to wave around. Every time they say something, have the other try to hit him. Try to top each other even more; shout the scene, whisper the scene, say it slowly, then quickly. Have them stand on desks, walk, run, skip, jump, etc.

Finally, really define the characters:
- one older, one younger
- one limps
- give them hat, cape
- one's drunk
- one twitches. etc.

Ask students to determine from what they just saw what makes the scene funny. This process of scene analysis may be used for any scene in the play throughout the examination of the play.

c) Follow up by discussing the rest of the scene using the students' homework questions as starting points.

d) You might want to do a similar experiment when we first meet Romeo that you did with Gregory and Sampson.

**Evaluation of Part V**

Observation of students' energy, enthusiasm and participation; collection of guided reading questions homework answers -- analysis of answers to access student understanding.

## Part VI: Critical Reading and Analysis of Text

### Days Seventeen to Twenty-six

### Rationale

Now the students are ready for the text of *Romeo and Juliet*. At this point they should be able to hear the words, use their imagination to create action and interpretation in their minds and with their classmates. They are also able to identify issues of the play and relate them to characters and a larger context. Working in cooperative learning teams with critical reading responsibilities and answering guided reading questions, the students will have opportunity to develop and utilize reading skills, peer teaching, imagination and creativity. At the same time, student success and involvement will rise, as well as self-esteem in a cooperative and encouraging environment. An abundance and variety of activities throughout the two weeks will enable each student to utilize his/her learning style, personalize issues and develop learning relationships with peers.

### Objectives/Goals

Students will

1) read scenes to determine their group's focused elements,

2) present selected scenes in a meaningful way indicating understanding of the scene,

3) develop an understanding of motivation of character,

4) relate situations, character motivation and issues of the play to their own lives,

5) work with peers to share perceptions and examine key elements.

### Methodology

Note: Encourage students to relate situations, characters, motivation and issues to their own lives throughout examination of the play. At certain points in the guide, places for this to happen are indicated through questions. However, discussion, analysis, writing and group work are all a fluent process. Opportunity for relating elements to students' lives cannot be dictated but rather are to be seized upon.

A list of activities and writing assignments are included in the appendix. These activities and writing assignments may be integrated throughout examination and discussion of the text.

a) Explain to the students that they will work with their teams to determine key elements and issues in the play:

- Their teams will be responsible for finding out about certain aspects of each scene and will report their findings to the class. They will have a few minutes during each class to strategize.
- All students will answer certain core questions for each scene.
- All students should write a personal reaction to each assigned reading in their journals.

b) Hand out the "Team Critical Reading Responsibilities" sheet and go over it. (See appendix for copy) These responsibilities should be rotated for each act. This way each team will have an opportunity to focus on each aspect.

c) Assign a reading for the next day with core questions to be answered; each team is to be responsible for their critical reading element.

Note: The teacher may want to give some critical reading questions to each team, along with core questions. Students should be reminded periodically to write reactions in their journals. The amount of reading should be determined according to what is going on with discussions and other activities.

Each class period may be spent in a variety of ways: team meeting to discuss the team's critical reading elements; sharing of team observations; general class discussion; the teacher pointing out important elements, issues, motivations, passages; acting out scenes; small group discussion; free writing; and any other activity that seems helpful.

It is suggested that at some point each team become responsible for staging a scene. Appropriate preparation time should be made available before presenting the scenes. Scenes may or may not be memorized. These scenes could be simple or elaborate.

Because the guided reading questions are conceptual and inferential, rather than comprehensive, keep a small nerf ball on hand. Periodically or every period, take the beginning of class to have the students toss the ball around the room. Whoever catches the ball must report one fact from the reading homework. This may be a simple or elaborate answer.

For example, one student might report that Romeo tried to shake Tybalt's hand. Another might try to describe the entire sword fight. Record student responses on flip chart paper and hang around the room. By the end of the unit the room will be plastered with details from *Romeo and Juliet*. This game takes the place of comprehensive quizzes.

## Evaluation of Part VI

Analysis of answers to guided reading questions, writing assignments, student perceptions during the class and group discussions; observation of student involvement in creative group and individual activities.

## Part VII: Further Exploration of Themes and Issues

Your next unit might explore other works with similar themes, issues and conflicts, such as *Mississippi Marsala, Boyz 'N the Hood, West Side Story.* All of these are available in video stores. *West Side Story* is particulary applicable since it is based on *Romeo and Juliet* by William Shakespeare.

# APPENDIX

## TEAM PROCESS

**These are your teams for this learning unit. Before beginning with your first project, do the following:**

1) At this initial meeting, get to know each other by introducing yourself, sharing some interest you have, and indicate why you are excited about this learning unit (I know you can think of something!), and explain what you hope to get out of the unit.

2) Choose a leader, a notetaker, a question-handler, an audio-visual person, and an information organizer. These roles will rotate for each project.

**Team Process Guidelines:**
1) You will be given numerous opportunities to meet with your team during class time, but be sure you are allowing time to meet outside of class if at all possible. This can be done on free periods (I will be happy to give you passes to the media center), after school, in the evenings, or on the weekend.

2) The leader is responsible for keeping the group focused and moving forward, and is by no means a dictator. Instead, the leader asks questions of the group and keeps discussions going, making sure everyone has a chance to contribute, and helps members of the group develop the project. The leader may or may not take on a section of the project.

3) The notetaker records the meetings and keeps track of who is working on which aspect of the team project. These notes will come in handy when you are getting ready for your project's presentation. Notes are to be handed in at the end of the project and are a history of your team's work. The notetaker also holds on to the centralized bibliography, makes sure it is in the correct format, and presents it neatly to me before your presentation.

4) The question-handler makes sure all of the required items are addressed by your report.

5) The audio-visual person arranges for drawings, charts, overlays, typed handouts, graphs and/or art work to be produced by the date of your presentation. He/she does not necessarily do it all; he/she just makes sure it gets done.

6) The information organizer puts the research in an organized fashion with the input of the team. Team members together decide on the order of the presentation, contributing ideas for transitions and support details; but it is the information organizer that puts it into an outline format to be handed in before your team's presentation.

7) Once you receive the hand-out for your team's topic, divide the workload. This division of labor does not have to be divided five ways. As a matter of fact, as you examine your topic's suggested areas, you might come to the conclusion that grouping areas and working in two's or three's will be the best way to work. These suggested areas are a guide. Feel free to expand on them and/or to take your topic in a more interesting direction as you discover information through your research. You may use materials from the English office, the drama department, social studies department, the media center, local libraries or your home. Interviews might also be interesting sources.

8) After your initial research is completed, meet again with your team. All members of the group are responsible for all the information gathered. It is up to the other members to be sure all other members have the necessary information. For example, if one member is finding out about Shakespeare's education and another about his family life, all other members must be given that information.

9) Each member is to contribute to the presentation of the team's project. This does not necessarily mean each member will speak in front of the class. One member might draw illustrations, another might critique a rehearsal of the project. Whatever you decide, be aware that if you do not present in front of the class for this team project, you will be expected to do so for a future project.

10) This is a team effort. Try to develop and maintain a positive attitude toward each other. Remember, decisions are to be arrived at as a team and the team earns a team grade. If you carry your own weight and help others carry theirs, you are assured success.

I will float from team to team. Do not hesitate to come see me about any aspect of your project.

**HAVE FUN!**

The team grade is arrived at as follows:

1) Team work during the project-
    How well did you work together?
    Did everyone contribute equally?
    How well did you stay focused?
    How well did you use your sources?
    How well did you inform each other? 30 points

2) Team Notes-
    How clearly do your notes explain your process?
    How thorough is the information you acquired as a team? 20 points

3) Outline of the Presentation-
    Do the topics follow each other?
    Are your transitions clear? Are topics substantiated? 10 points

4) The Presentation
    A handout will be given to you, and we will go over the presentation process in detail. We will also go over it more generally before your next team meeting so you can keep the presentation in mind as you explore your topic. 30 points

5) The Follow-up Activity
    You will answer three questions from the audience reaction papers the following day. You will also assess their papers. 10 points

## Follow-up after each Presentation

Now, it's the turn of your classmates. They, of course, have been paying close attention to you and have exercised the opportunity to ask questions during or after your presentation, but their main job is to write a half page critique for homework the night after your performance, including what they learned that was new, what they liked about your speech, what and how you could improve, and 3 questions that they would like you to answer.

The next day, they present their 15 or 16 half pages to you. You then meet as a group and assess their homework: a check plus, check, or check minus. Deliver the papers to me and answer about 3 of their questions for the class. Your handling of this part of your responsibility gets you the other 10 points.

Finally, you must evaluate yourself. This is a time for introspection and an honest appraisal of what kind of team player you have been. If you have participated and contributed equally, you should give yourself high marks, but if you did not pull your weight as a team member, then you have the responsibility to assess yourself honestly. Use the following criteria and assess yourself from one to ten on each.

How well did you:

___ work with others?

___ respect and support the others?

___ contribute to team discussions?

___ stay focused and not mess around during the team work periods?

___ use your sources (Did you use several or just one)?

___ prepare your team work outside of the team work period?

___ inform your teammates by presenting your material to the group?

___ contribute to the effective presentation of your teammates?

___ participate as a productive team player?

___ What score from 1-10 would you give yourself overall?

___ Total points

## Structuring a Presentation

Be sure that your presentation contains the following areas (This is also a sample of how to outline your presentation):

I. Introduction

A. Grabber: this sentence, story, joke, demonstration, or audience participation activity wakes up your audience and "grabs" their attention. It might include using a visual.

B. Thesis: this announces to your audience the general topic and idea running through the presentation. Think of an interesting angle for your thesis that ties your topic areas together.

C. Overview: list the various areas you will be covering. This section of the presentation makes it much easier for your audience to follow the presentation and recognize transitions when they come up.

II. Body: The body of your presentation is the meat of it. Different team members might present different parts of the body.

A. Logical sequence of main points (overview) using transitions to indicate a new area to be presented.

B. Illustrative examples, anecdotes, analogies, audience participation, use of visuals. It is in the body that you "prove" your thesis or present your ideas with supporting detail.

C. To outline this section of your presentation, let each capital letter be a new main point. Include supportive material as numbers (1, 2, 3) under the capital letter headings.

III. Conclusion

A. Review main points

B. Remind audience of thesis

C. Leave the audience with a thought

Now you are ready to go!!

## Group Presentation: Observation Sheet

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Stront Points:

---

Content/Organization:

What was the purpose of the presentation?

Was it organized sequentially? Easy to follow?

Transitions?

Visual Aids (if used) - Appropriate, meaningful, legible?

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Non-Verbals:

Body movement

Gestures

Posture

Eye contact

Voice

## Feedback/Observation Sheet

| | NMA | E | VE | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Facial Expression | | | | |
| Body Movement | | | | |
| Gestures | | | | |
| Posture | | | | |
| Eye Contact | | | | |
| Control of Nervous Mannerisms | | | | |
| Rate of Speech | | | | |
| Voice-pitch | | | | |
| Voice-volume | | | | |
| Self-confidence | | | | |
| Interest in Presentation | | | | |
| | | | | |

NMA = Needs more attention
E = Effective
VE = Very effective

## Checklist for Preparation of Presentation

___ Have you researched the topic and do you feel comfortable with your findings?

___ Is your material appropriate for your audience?

___ Is your material synchronized with the time allotted?

___ Is the purpose of your talk clear?

___ Is the introduction appropriate?

___ Is the material sequentially organized?

___ Have you prepared note cards, outlines or other presentation aids?

___ Are the visuals ready, organized, meaningful, appropriate, and legible?

___ If a slide projector is to be used, is the slide carousel correctly loaded, in position on the projector, in focus and ready to be turned on?

___ Is the flipchart or chalkboard ready (clean and stocked with marker or chalk and eraser)?

___ If you are showing a video, do you have a monitor? Do you know how to use it?

___ Do you know how to turn off the overhead lights? Is there enough supplemental light to enable participants to take notes?

___ Have you made up flip charts in advance for any material you want to refer to during class? Have you covered it with a blank sheet (so participants aren't reading it before you want them to)?

___ If you are using recorded material for your presentation, have you arranged for a cassette player to be on hand, and have you tested it ahead of time to be sure it works?

___ Are your hand-outs ready to be passed out?

___ Is each member of your team clear as to what his/her role is and what and when he/she is to contribute to the presentation?

___ Has the team rehearsed the presentation and given each other feedback?

## Delivery Techniques
### Non-Verbal

1. Body Movement

The use of your body, if it is to be effective in speaking, has to be comfortable and appropriate to you. Well-timed suitable body movements can release pent up energy, allow you to forget yourself, and lead you more completely into the free expression of your ideas.

2. Gestures: Facial Expression

Gestures, when used effectively during presenting, will do three important things:

a. add interest from the audience's perspective,
b. enhance the meaning and flavor of your words,
c. relax you by putting nervous energy to constructive use,

3. Nervous Mannerisms

When presenters repeatedly exhibit nervous mannerisms, it hurts their image as someone with poise and control. Nervous mannerisms can be distracting and annoying to the audience and can inhibit their listening.

To insure self-confidence:

a. sustain a belief in your subject,
b. have a thorough knowledge of it,
c. be prepared and well organized,
d. avoid nervous mannerisms that undermine confidence.

4. Posture

Good posture is extremely important because it usually is the first thing an audience notices and judges about a speaker. Good posture not only promotes a speaker's self-confidence, but helps the physical speech mechanism (lungs, throat, etc.) work properly as well, in order to produce strong, resonant, and clear sounds.

5. Eye Contact

Eye contact plays a major role in human relations. Eyes used to their fullest capabilities during presenting can add much to the audience's perception of a speaker's self-confidence, strength, conviction, and confidence in the material. Proper eye contact can help presenters develop and maintain audience rapport.

## Delivery Techniques
## Verbal

### 1. Volume

Speaking a bit more loudly than normal at appropriate times or speaking more softly can help create an image for you as a presenter. Select and vary your volume strategically.

### 2. Rate

Rate refers to how fast one talks as well as the amount of time devoted to a pause and pronouncing a syllable, phrase or sentence. Each variation in rate can be used for a specific purpose.

### 3. Pitch or Tone

Pitch also creates an impression in the audience. Voice pitch (the frequency of vibration of sound waves) naturally changes up and down in everyday conversation. Changing pitch can show changes of thought and add meaning to your words.

### 4. Fillers

Fillers are sounds or words unknowingly used to fill time between spoken words or phrases instead of using pauses. Using fillers repeatedly can distract the audience or cause negative impressions of the speaker.

### 5. Articulation

Articulation is the production of clear precise sounds. This has nothing to do with accent. You should use your natural native or regional accent when speaking. It is one more thing that makes you you!

### 6. Language Selection

Your audience analysis will give you information about their background, level of expertise, familiarity with your subject, etc. Knowing this will help you maintain a conversational style and still be clear and believable.

### 7. Using Humor

Plan ahead to incorporate some lightness in your presentation. Well-timed humor humanizes the speaker, raises attention, and warms the audience.

8. Above all: Be Yourself! Let your personality shine through!

## Coping with Anxiety and Nervousness

Giving a presentation can cause an extreme degree of self-consciousness and tension in many presenters. In fact, according to the *Book of Lists* (David Wallechinsky, et al: New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1977) of the ten greatest human fears in the United States, speaking before a group of people was considered number one. Still, a small amount of presentation jitters can be beneficial. The appropriate amount of adrenalin produced as a result of anxiety enables a presenter to be more alert and better equipped to produce the extra effort needed to do his or her best.

Some signs of nervousness include:

- Weakness, dizziness
- Quivering or high-pitched voice
- Lack of eye contact
- Fidgeting, rocking, pacing
- Expressionless face
- Dry mouth
- Increased heart rate
- Upset stomach
- Shaking
- Heavy perspiration
- Muscular tension

Being nervous about giving a presentation is natural. What counts is how you manage and use this nervousness. Recognize that you are nervous, accept it, and let it go to work for you.

The following guidelines will help you control the stress involved in giving presentations:

1. Reduce unknowns. Anticipate and plan for problems; analyze your audience in advance; check out your meeting room, audiovisual equipment and materials.

2. Develop a positive mental attitude. Eliminate negative thinking; set high, but realistic and attainable goals for your presentation; visualize positive results.

3. Use delivery techniques to your advantage. Relax facial muscles and smile; use appropriate gestures and movement to drain away adrenalin; speak slowly, loudly, in a lower pitch, and use pauses.

4. Rehearse, rehearse, rehearse. Be thoroughly prepared and leave time to practice; use visual aids or notes to help jog your memory and keep you organized; time yourself; get feedback.

5. Exercise to reduce tension; or do something enjoyable to take your mind off your talk; avoid drinking too much coffee; get a good night's sleep.

6. Breathe deeply; and do the exercises described on the next page prior to speaking.

## MINI-EXERCISES TO RELIEVE TENSION OF STAGE FRIGHT*

### EXERCISE I. Head Drooping

Step 1. Sitting or standing, close your eyes and "feel."

Step 2. Try to feel the balance of your head on your shoulders and search for the precise point at which it seems to be weightless.

Step 3. Now, let it fall smoothly (without a jerk) to a fully forward position. You should feel some pull across your shoulders on both sides. Depending on your postural habits, you may notice the pull more on one side. This is unimportant here.

Step 4. Let your head hang free in this forward position for the count of ten. Then, slowly bring it up and backward as far as it will go without strain. Let it remain in this position for the count of five.

Step 5. Repeat the forward head drooping position and return to the backward position three to four times (each time counting as indicated in Step 4). You may want to finish by slowly rolling your head in a large circle, then reversing direction.

### EXERCISE II. Neck Tension Release

Step 1. Sit in a straight-backed chair.

Step 2. Place the heels of both hands on your forehead above the eyebrows with the fingers facing upward.

Step 3. Slowly press your head forward against the resistance of your hands. Maintaining this steady, moderate pressure, count to three and release the pressure without removing your hands from your head. Wait for five seconds and repeat the movement in the same manner. Repeat three to five times.

Step 4. Now, place both hands on the back of your head and interlace your fingers.

Step 5. Using the same counting procedure as you did with your hands on your forehead, this time exert the pressure by pressing your head backward against your hands. Repeat the entire procedure three to five times. (Closing your eyes helps concentration.)

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*Abne M. Eisenberg, Living Communication, page 228-229.

# HANDOUTS FOR PART II: COOPERATIVE LEARNING TEAMS FOR BACKGROUND EXPLORATION

# TOPICS FOR PART II

## Life in Elizabethan England

The following are areas of your team's topic on which you might gather information. Do not hesitate to eliminate some and include other areas as you uncover ideas concerning your topic. Though areas are listed for you, they are not to be treated as isolated and unrelated to the other areas, but rather should be explored as being interconnected. Keep in mind that you want to present this topic in a related and interesting way. You are not bombarding us with facts here, but rather you are presenting your material so that we can acquire a concept of what it was like to be an Elizabethan. For example, don't just tell facts about the Queen. Tell us what she was like, how she influenced her subjects' lives. As often as possible relate your findings to our times in general and to your own culture in specifics. Be creative in your approach. Above all have fun discussing unusual aspects about your topic.

Suggested areas:

The Queen
Her Style of Ruling
The English Navy
Trade and Exploration
Home Life
Dwellings
Different Occupations
Eating Habits
Important People
Significant Events or Occurrences, such as, bubonic plague, defeat of the Spanish Armada

Compare selected aspects to your own culture, e.g., eating habits, entertainment, home life.

Compare to our type of government.

Suggested Visuals:

Pictures of the Queen and/or other important people
Pictures of drawings depicting the plague
Picture of the Spanish Armada

Other:
Sampling of Elizabethan favorite foods

## Fashions, Costumes and Leisure Time/Entertainment

The following are areas of your team's topic on which you might gather information. Do not hesitate to eliminate some and include other areas as you uncover ideas concerning your topic. Though areas are listed for you, they are not to be treated as isolated and unrelated to the other areas, but rather should be explored as interconnected. Keep in mind that you want to present this topic in a related and interesting way. You are not bombarding us with facts here, but rather you are presenting your material so that we can acquire a concept of what it was like to be an Elizabethan. For example, don't just describe the fashions. Explain what these fashions indicate about the people who wore them. What does the sport of bear-baiting tell us about their culture? As often as possible relate your findings to our times in general and to your own culture in specifics. Be creative in your approach. Above all have fun discovering unusual aspects about your topic.

Suggested areas:

Women's Fashions
Men's Fashions
Children's Fashions
Accessories (capes, hats, etc.)
Fabric used
Fashions for various occasions
Fashion according to different classes
Costumes of Elizabethan Theatre:
- How they reflected society
- How they reflected character
- How actors acquired costumes

What fashion reflected about Elizabethan culture

Compare to our fashions: what our fashions and leisure time activities represent about our various cultures.

Suggested Visuals:

Pictures of fashions reflecting the various classes of Elizabethan England
Pictures of costumes of some of Shakespeare's characters
Pictures of various leisure time activities

Other:
Elizabethan Fashion Show
Teach the class an Elizabethan Game.

## Education

The following are areas of your team's topic on which you might gather information. Do not hesitate to eliminate some and include other areas as you uncover ideas concerning your topic. Though areas are listed for you, they are not to be treated as isolated and unrelated to the other areas, but rather should be explored as interconnected. Keep in mind that you want to present this topic in a related and interesting way. You are not bombarding us with facts here, but rather you are presenting your material so that we can acquire a concept of what it was like to be an Elizabethan. For example, make some judgments about their educational system as compared to ours. As often as possible relate your findings to our times in general and to your own culture in specifics. Be creative in your approach. Above all have fun discovering unusual aspects about your topic.

Suggested areas:

Education for males
Education for females
How education differed for the different classes.
What their education system says about Elizabethan culture
Compare to our education system
What our education system says about our culture

Suggested Visuals:

Pictures of school room or desk of Elizabethan culture
Picture of today's classroom to compare
Handouts of sample pages from textbooks

Other:
Demonstrate a sample lesson making us all behave as Elizabethan children would have in school.

## Shakespeare's Life

The following are areas of your team's topic on which you might gather information. Do not hesitate to eliminate some and include other areas as you uncover ideas concerning your topic. Though areas are listed for you, they are not to be treated as isolated and unrelated to the other areas, but rather should be explored as interconnected. Keep in mind that you want to present your topic in a related and interesting way. You are not bombarding us with facts here, but rather you are presenting your material so that we can acquire a concept of what it was like to be an Elizabethan. For example, how was Shakespeare's life reflected in his plays? How did his writings reflect the culture? As often as possible relate your findings to our times in general and to your own culture in specifics. Be creative in your approach. Above all have fun discovering unusual aspects about your topic.

Suggested areas:

His parents and their occupation
His education
His family life
His career as an actor and playwright
His theatre companies
His income and lifestyle
His plays (Don't describe them; just give them out as a list)
Other writings
His retirement
His gravestone
His personality
His themes

Suggested Visuals:

Picture of Shakespeare
Handout of titles of his plays and the dates
Pictures of the area in which he lived

Other:
Reading of some of his poetry

## Elizabethan Theatre

The following are areas of your team's topic on which you might gather information. Do not hesitate to eliminate some and include other areas as you uncover ideas concerning your topic. Though areas are listed for you, they are not to be treated as isolated and unrelated to the other areas, but rather should be explored as interconnected. Keep in mind that you want to present this topic in a related and interesting way. You are not bombarding us with facts here, but rather you are presenting your material so that we can acquire a concept of what it was like to be an Elizabethan. For example, don't just describe the audience. Give an indication of what a day at the theatre was like back then. As often as possible relate your own findings to our times in general and to your own culture in specifics. Be creative in your approach. Above all have fun discovering unusual aspects about your topic.

Suggested areas:

The Playhouses
The Scenery and Props
How they established the locality of a scene
How they established the time of day of a scene
The staging
The audience
Compare with today's theatre and audiences

Suggested Visuals:

Model of an Elizabethan Theatre
Pictures of scenes from a Shakespeare play

Other:
Stage a sample scene with audience interaction

# HANDOUTS FOR PART III:
# RELEVANCY: EXAMINING THE ISSUES

## Dealing with the Issues of the Play

The following five pages contain role plays and questions and activities that deal with the issues of the play. These role plays and questions are companions to the free writing and sculpture portion of dealing with the issues. The teacher's role is as facilitator and coach:

a) Float from group to group to give suggestions and direction.

b) Side coach: "Be sure feelings, attitudes, motivations, desires are translated into action. Use your voice, face, body language."

c) After the role play, have the performers talk about how they felt, what happened in the scene, and how resolution might have been achieved. Assist the performers by asking them appropriate questions.

d) After the performers have expressed their ideas, ask the audience to share their observations. How did these characters feel? What showed you that? How else might the conflict have been played out? (Here the teacher might have other students act out the same role play, but differently.) What incidents in your life or that you know of relate to this incident? In what ways?

e) Following the role play, give each group a list of questions to explore about their issue. Again, the teacher should float among the students to help draw them out and help them focus their discussions.

## Role Plays for Use with the Quotations

In order to develop a role play, you will need to do the following:

a) Determine the necessary characters to play the scene.

b) Give each character a life:
    Who is each?
    Where does he/she come from?
    What is each character's life like?
    What has made them who they are?
    Where is each coming from before the scene?
    What do they want to obtain in the scene?
    How do they feel in the scene?
    How are their feelings and desires shown through action?

c) Outline the scenario:
    Who enters when and from where?
    What is to be said (in general, not in specifics)?
    What actions are to be used?

d) Rehearse the scene. The scene is to be improvised, not memorized. Run through it a few times. It will continue to develop.

e) Perform the role play. It is an ever growing scene, so it will be different in performance as it was in rehearsal.

Note: If there are not enough roles for each member of the team, the other members should contribute with direction, content and feedback.

## Role Plays

**"Some twenty of them fought in this black style."**

You are stopped on the street by someone who doesn't like you. He/She is with two friends. You are with one friend. This foe insults you and pushes you around, baiting you to fight. You don't want to. How do you respond? How does your friend? How does the foe and his/her friend react? What happens when everyone gets pulled into the argument?

**"With love's light wings did I o'erperch these walls,
For stoney limits can not hold love out."**

You see a girl at a dance to whom you are attracted. She finds you attractive, too. You both start to speak to each other, flirt a little. Both of your friends pull you apart and tell you the other is the wrong kind of person to get involved with. Your team can determine what the reasons are that the two of you should not date. What do you say to each other when you first meet? What do your friends say to you? Why do they say such things? How do you react? What does the future hold for you and your new found love?

**"I pray would tell my lord and father, madame,
I will not marry yet; and when I do, I swear
It shall be Romeo . . . not Paris."**

Your parents tell you that you are to no longer see the boy/girl you have been seeing and feel you are in love with. What reasons do your parents give for not seeing this individual? What reasons do you give for seeing him/her? How do you and your parents speak to each other concerning this issue? How is the issue resolved?

**"I long to die . . ."**

Something has really been upsetting you lately to the point where you are contemplating suicide. With the help of your team, determine what that something has been. How has it made you feel? Why has it driven you to such extreme feelings? Together, write an inner monologue of your character in which these issues and feelings are verbalized. What would you do if a friend shared these feelings with you? Read the monologue to the class.

What . . . talk of peace? I hate the word
As I hate hell, all Montagues, and thee."

Two gangs meet in the street. They are from different cultures. They exchange insults that have to do with culture. Your team may determine what cultures, real or fictitious, are to be represented by the gangs. What characteristics of each culture are used as derogatory comments? How does each gang react to the insults? Where do the perceptions come from? How does each gang member feel? How are these feelings expressed in the scene?

## Questions and Activities to Explore the Issues

Here are some questions to reflect on before the next class. Concentrate on the issue related to your group's quotation from the play. Write your impressions in your journal. Some issues require bringing something to class from home or from the newspapers. Be prepared to share your opinion with your group.

**"Some twenty of them fought in this black style."**

Collect newspaper or magazine articles that depict senseless violence in your community or surrounding area. Examine the details surrounding the violence. Determine possible reasons for the violence. What ages were most of the perpetrators and victims?

It is said that violence in our streets is wiping out a whole generation and is the number two or three cause of death among teenagers, exchanging the second and third slot with suicide. Children are killing children. What do you think of this concept? Do you agree? Disagree? How?

Have you or anyone you know ever been the victim of violence, or have you ever witnessed an act of violence? Describe the incident. How did you feel? What did you do? What far-reaching consequences did it have for you? How can you or anybody else change things? What are some of the solutions to this senseless violence that is permeating our society?

Present some of your findings and conclusions to the class.

**"With love's light wings did I o'erperch these walls,**
**For stoney limits can not hold love out."**

Describe how it feels at first to be in love. How do you feel physically (Can you eat? Sleep? Does your heart race, do your palms perspire?) What occupies most of your thoughts? What other aspects of your life suffer? How? What are the positive things about being in love? What are the negative?

What's the difference between love and infatuation? How does one know when infatuation becomes love? How do we idealize the person we love? How does our view of that person change over time?

What do you feel is important in a love relationship? What role do the following play: sexuality, spirituality, emotion? What emphasis should each have in a relationship? What is needed to make love sincere and to help it endure?

**"I pray would tell my lord and father, madame,**
**I will not marry yet; and when I do, I swear**
**It shall be Romeo . . . not Paris."**

Identify the things that cause disagreement and conflict with your parents. You might begin by considering such things as household chores, working at a job, financial responsibility, respect for family, parental discipline, leisure time. What do you think causes these conflicts? These generational conflicts can lead to defying your parents. List ways you have defied your parents. Assess the appropriateness of your behavior.

Have you ever made a serious decision about something important without your parents' approval? How did your parents react when they found out? What were the consequences of your deception? If you had it to do over again, would you have acted differently? Why or why not?

Have your parents ever disapproved of a boyfriend or girlfriend? What would cause your parents to disapprove of your boyfriend/girlfriend? How would you or did you react to their disapproval?

Do your parents prefer you to date someone of the same race, religion, or social background? How important are these elements to you? What do you think about the idea of arranged marriages? Given the high statistics of divorce in our society, why not try arranged marriages?

**"I long to die . . ."**

Look up statistics on suicide in this country. It is the second or third leading cause of death among young people, exchanging second and third place with homicide. What are some of the causes of suicide? How can these people be helped? Have you or anyone you know been affected by the suicide of a loved one? Who was it? How did you feel? What are some of the views of suicide in other cultures? How did they develop?

Note to teacher:

Your local Mental Health Association will have pamphlets on teenage suicide. Call them in advance of this activity to get enough for your class. Give them out to the team first to help them get started with the discussion. Invite someone from the Mental Health Association to come talk to your class.

**"What . . . talk of peace? I hate the word**
**As I hate hell, all Montagues, and thee."**

In tomorrow's discussion bring in something that is unique to your culture, ethnicity, race or religion. These items could include such things as tapestries, pictures, recipes, music, dance, clothing, utensils. Share the significance of this artifact with the group. What does it represent for you?

What are the different cultures of the school? These cultures are not merely defined by race or ethnicity. Also, think in terms of gender, disabilities, cliques, clubs, etc. For example, are the "jocks" a culture? Next, broaden your discussion to include your community, the country.

What culture clashes arise among some of these groups? Focus this part of your discussion on your own experience with culture clash. Are you a member of the "inside" or "outside" culture"? Are you part of the "dominant culture" or are you "dominated"? How do you feel about your position? How do you feel when you are part of a culture clash either as an "insider" or "outsider"? What are some possible resolutions to culture conflict?

# HANDOUTS FOR PART PART VI:
# CRITICAL READING AND ANALYSIS OF TEXT

## Team Critical Reading Responsibilities

Each team will focus on one particular aspect for each act. These responsibilities will rotate from act to act. Each team will report selected findings to the class. You will have an opportunity to meet with your team before each class to decide what to report. You are encouraged to read the scenes and discuss them together as a team.

**Team Responsibilities #1:** There was not much scenery or stage directions in Shakespeare's plays. Your team is to determine the place and time of each scene, as well as the action. Who does what when? Lines will give you hints. For example, if someone says "stop shouting," you know the other character has raised his/her voice. If a character says "let me go," you know someone has grabbed him/her. Sometimes it is more subtle than that and can include glances, looks, etc. Your challenge is to find the subtle as well as the obvious. List your findings and decisions about action to share with the other teams.

**Team Responsibilities #2:** There are opposites or contrasts galore in *Romeo and Juliet*, such as the pain of love, life and death, love and hate, and particularly light and dark images. Speeches themselves contain opposites, especially Romeo and Juliet's speeches about their love and each other. Your job is to find these opposites. Your findings might include actual lines or opposing confrontations or contradictory feelings.

**Team Responsibilities #3:** There is much violence in this play. Your team is to find not only the violence on the streets, but in the families. These should include not only acts of violence but words that might lead to violence, as well as feelings or tendencies towards violence. Tybalt is a character to pay close attention to. You should also include words or actions that try to prevent any violence. For example, Capulet tries to prevent Tybalt from fighting at the masked party.

**Team Responsibilities #4:** This play is about love as well as hate. Your team is to follow the development of the love story and report back on what is happening externally as well as internally. How do Romeo and Juliet feel about their love in various scenes? How do you know this? What obstacle is their love experiencing in each scene? How do they overcome each obstacle? Be aware that just because Romeo and Juliet are not in a scene that does not mean you cannot determine how their love is developing. For example, one scene in which they are absent might introduce a potential obstacle.

**Team Responsibilities #5:** Romeo and Juliet are said to be star-crossed lovers, given over to fate. Trace how chance plays a part in their story. Also, be aware that way leads to way (as Robert Frost tells us in his poem, "The Road Not Taken"), and in many ways we are responsible for our own actions. With that in mind, also trace the series of decisions and mistakes that lead this love story to its fatal end. In other words, what is each consequence of each decision Romeo and Juliet make. You will need to keep track of decisions as they are made, as well as their consequences. This could be simply done by listing each decision and its consequence.

# Guided Reading Questions

## ACT I

### Act I Scene 2

1. How does Shakespeare suggest that Capulet and Paris are already in conversation at the opening of Scene 2?

2. Upon what condition will Capulet consent to Paris marrying Juliet?

3. The clown speaks in prose. Why? Why must the clown have Romeo help him with the list of guests? What is the two-fold purpose of the clown in this section?

4. How are the following lines so like love: line 46, "One's pain is lessened by another's anguish,"; line 49, "infection to the eye"; lines 54-56, "Not mad, but bound more than a madman is:/ Shut up in prison, kept without my food,/ Whipped and tormented." Have you ever felt like this when in love?

6. Who does Romeo find will be at Capulet's party that makes him want to go? Have you ever been in a similar situation? Describe it.

7. Benvolio is trying to convince Romeo to crash the party to see women more beautiful than Rosaline so that he might forget her. What does Benvolio mean when he says in line 89, "And I will make thee think thy swan a crow"?

### Act I Scene 3

1. In line 10, Lady Capulet says Juliet is of "a pretty age." What does this mean?

2. The nurse speaks in prose. Why does Shakespeare have her do so? What is the pattern of prose -vs- verse that you see unfolding?

3. The nurse is rather vulgar. See if you can explain the vulgarity of her following lines: "wormwood to my dug" (line 26), "Thou wilt fall backward when thou hast more wit, wilt thou not Jule?", (line 42-43), "bump as big as a cockerel's stone" (line 53), "wisdom from my teat" (line 68), "Women grow by men" (line 95), "seek happy nights to happy days" (line 106).

4. By looking carefully at what she says and how she says it, what impressions of the Nurse's personality do you think the audience is meant to form? What do you imagine her physical appearance would be? If you were casting the play, what kind of actress would you choose to play the part? Do you know people like the nurse?

5. Comment on the tone of Juliet's reaction to her mother in line 66. Have you ever responded to one of your parents this way? Describe the incident.

6. Lady Capulet draws a metaphor of Paris to a book. Comment on this metaphor citing some of the details of the comparison (lines 81-92). What does this tell you about Lady Capulet's character?

**Act I Scene 4**

1. How is love like what Romeo says in lines 25-26 ("It is rough,/Too rude, too boisterous, and it pricks like thorns.")? How does Mercutio answer him? Explain the quote, don't just give it.

2. In the lines 35-39, the love-lorn Romeo is taking himself very seriously and takes a rather aloof, patronizing view of mere, light-hearted revelry. How do we know this? When have you been impatient with your friend's lightheartedness when you have felt down? How did you react?

3. Why else does Romeo say he does not want to go to the masque, besides that he is depressed?

4. Mercutio is a foil to Romeo in this scene. What is a foil and explain how Mercutio is one.

5. What should be the audience's first impression of Mercutio? Quote evidence from the scene to support your opinions. How is this similar to your friendships?

### Queen Mab Speech

The teacher may want to go over the "Queen Mab" speech in detail by first having teams discuss it with the help of guided questions, and then having the class discuss the speech together.

1. What effect do the rhyming couplets in the lines before the speech have? How do they add to the effect of the "Queen Mab" speech and the character of Mercutio?

2. Key words and phrases to "Queen Mab" speech: fairies, midwife, agate, alderman, atomies, athwart, spinners, film, joiner-squirrel, grub, time out o' mind, tithe-pig's, benefice, ambuscadoes, health five fathom deep, anon, plaits, hag. Be sure you are finding the meaning of the words/phrases the way they are used in the speech.

3. Who is Queen Mab?

4. What does she do in general?

5. Next, take what she does in general and show it in specifics.

6. What is the dramatic effect of the speech at this juncture in the play?

7. What does the speech tell us about the character of Mercutio?

8. Give specific director notes for the actor who is giving this speech of Mercutio. Give specific voice inflections and gestures to accompany specific lines. Have someone on your team present a small portion of the speech by directing him/her.

Note: The teacher may want to divide parts of the speech among the teams for presentation.

9. What does Romeo's interruption of the speech tell us?

10. How are Romeo's lines 106-113 ("I fear, too early, for my mind, On, lusty gentlemen!") foreshadowing?

### Act I Scene 5

Skip lines 1-15. Get right to the party!

1. What does Capulet mean when he tells the gentlemen that the ladies will "walk about with you"?

2. What do the Capulet and Cousin (or 2Capulet in some versions) reminisce about in lines 30-40? Why do you think Shakespeare places such emphasis on Capulet's age?

3. Rosaline is utterly forgotten as Romeo instantly falls in love with Juliet. (Note that Shakespeare does not indicate which of the ladies is Rosaline, and so we can make no comparison for ourselves) What difference do you notice between his reaction here to Juliet and his description of Rosaline in Act I, Scenes 1, 2, and 4?

4. What is the dramatic impact of Tybalt's parting rhyming couplet? To whom does it apply?

5. The first meeting between Romeo and Juliet takes the form of a sonnet, shared between them. What is the effect of this unusual device? Look at the imagery used in their conversation. How does it enhance the subject matter? List some comparisons. What is the attitude of each to the other?

6. How does this compare with Romeo's professed earlier attitude toward Rosaline?

7. Why does Juliet not directly ask about Romeo? How does this compare to how you find out about someone that you are interested in?

8. In this scene we see Romeo and Juliet falling deeply in love at their first meeting. What is the dramatic impact of this on the audience, and how does Shakespeare achieve his particular effects in this scene? Have you ever fallen instantly in love? How did you feel? How did you act? How did this love relationship affect other relationships in your life?

9. What contrasts are drawn? Is the scene optimistic? or pessimistic? or a mixture of the two?

10. What thoughts are we left with at the end of Act I?

Note: The teacher may want to have the class look closely at this sonnet, recalling the sonnet form from the prologue exercise. Have students bring in love poetry of their own or lyrics from a love song. Spend a period discussing the language of love, past and present. Encourage students to discuss how they express their feelings of love today.

## Guided Reading Questions

## ACT II

### Prologue

1. Although this prologue adds nothing new to the plot, merely acting as a convenient summary of what has happened to Romeo and Juliet in Act I, do you think that anything would be lost if it were omitted? Give a reason for your opinion.

2. How do the first 2 lines represent Romeo's love for Rosaline and Juliet? Which word refers to Rosaline and which to Juliet?

### Act II Scene 1

1. What is Mercutio's attitude towards Romeo in this scene?

2. What contrasts are there between Benvolio and Mercutio in this conversation?

3. List at least three similes/metaphors Romeo uses in his speech about Juliet. Explain each.

4. What is the importance of Juliet's speech about names (lines 38-49) in the context of the play as a whole?

5. How do you think an actress might physically react to Romeo's revelation of his presence? Bear in mind where she may be standing and what she might be wearing.

6. How does Romeo say that he got over the orchard wall? What does this tell us about the "power of love"? (You might want to play "The Power of Love" by Huey Lewis and the News. Have students analyze the words to the song. Have them determine how this song might relate to *Romeo and Juliet*.

7. When Juliet says her kinsmen would murder him, he answers that there is something worse than their twenty swords. What is that? What does Juliet say about truth and pretense in lines 85-106? What does it reveal about her?

8. What does it appear Romeo wants from Juliet in line 126? What does he want in actuality?

9. What is the effect of the Nurse's interruption?

10.~~9.~~→According to Juliet, what purpose must Romeo have for his wooing?

11. This is one of the most famous love scenes in the whole of English literature. What are the main impressions left by the scene? How does our knowledge of their family circumstances affect our view of the love between Romeo and Juliet? Have your team act out the scene for class.

## Act II Scene 3

1. What are Mercutio and Benvolio wondering about Romeo when this scene opens?

2. Who has written a letter to Romeo? What is it about?

3. What does Mercutio mean in line 13: "Alas, poor Romeo, he is already dead!"?

4. Explain the play on words with the word, goose in the lines 68-82.

5. What does the Nurse want from Romeo? What message does he give her?

6. How does Romeo plan on getting to Juliet's chamber?

## Act II Scene 4

1. What is Juliet's state of mind in this scene?

2. How does the nurse behave?

3. If you were directing this scene, how would you make it comic?

4. Have you ever had a similar conversation with someone who had important information but kept teasing you by withholding it from you? What was it? How did you react? Compare it to Juliet's reaction.

## Act II Scene 5

1. How are lines 1-8 dramatic irony?

2. How would you have Romeo and Juliet behave in this scene?

3. What do the Friar's last lines in this scene mean?

## Guided Reading Questions

## ACT III

### Act III Scene 1

1. Why does Benvolio want to get off the streets?

2. Why does Mercutio address Tybalt as "rat-catcher" and "King of Cats"? Go back to II, 4 to find this reference.

3. What justice does Lady Capulet want? What does this tell us about her character?

4. What does the Prince decide Romeo's punishment will be?

5. This is the turning point of the story. In what way?

6. The play is often said to be a comedy up to when Romeo draws his sword. Do you agree or disagree? Explain your answer.

### Act III Scene 2

1. Has the Nurse any awareness of Juliet's feelings here, or is she absorbed in her own grief? Explain your answer.

2. In what ways is Juliet emotionally torn in this scene? Have you had similar experiences in which you were torn between two loyalties, two loves, or some other emotional bond? Describe the situation.

3. What do Juliet's remarks about her parents reveal about her feelings towards them and Romeo?

4. What does Juliet threaten to do near the end of the scene?

5. How do the closing words of the scene change the prevailing mood?

### Act III Scene 3

1. Compare the violent expression of Romeo's grief with Juliet's in the previous scene. Do they use similar language and express similar sentiments? How?

2. How would you describe Romeo's state of mind at this point in the play? How does it fit in the general picture of his character and temperament? How does his youth and inexperience show? Recall incidents in which you had similar heights of emotion. How did you react?

3. What contribution does the Nurse make to the dramatic impact of the scene?

4. How does the Nurse respond to the Friar's speech? What effect does her response have on the scene?

## Act III Scene 4

1. How does Capulet's reaction to Tybalt's death compare with the reaction of Romeo and Juliet? What does this suggest about their emotional capacities? Recall incidents that had a high emotional impact on you that also had a very different emotional impact on your parents. What difficulties did these differences cause?

2. What is the dramatic impact of this scene?

## Act III Scene 5

1. What anxiety do we feel at the beginning of the scene as long as Romeo remains?

2. What is the dramatic effect of the difference between Juliet's and the audience's knowledge, on the one hand, and Lady Capulet's meaning on the other hand, in their conversation?

3. How does Juliet react to the news that she will marry Paris? Have you ever been forced into doing something by your parents that you were dead set against? How did everyone concerned react? How was it resolved?

4. How does Capulet treat his daughter? How do you feel about this treatment? Do you feel any sympathy for him? How?

5. What dramatic ironic statements are made in this scene? For example, Lady Capulet says, "I would the fool were warmed to her grave!"

6. What do you think of the advice the Nurse gives Juliet?

7. Compare the mood of the scene at the end with that of the scene at the beginning.

# Guided Reading Questions

## ACT IV

### Act IV Scene 1

1. What is the dramatic effect of the audience seeing Paris walk onto the stage with Friar Lawrence? What is conveyed in the opening line?

2. In this scene Juliet and Paris come face to face for the only time in the play. What are likely Juliet's feelings on meeting Paris?

3. What characteristics of Paris are revealed in this meeting with Juliet?

4. What does Juliet's language in this scene reveal about her state of mind?

5. What plan does the Friar come up with? Be specific.

### Act IV Scene 2

1. How does Juliet act towards her father when she returns from Friar Lawrence?

2. How has Capulet's mood changed? What do you think of this change? Does it make you feel any differently towards him?

3. For spite of the pressure of time, Capulet impulsively advances the wedding by twenty-four hours. What important impact does this have on the Friar's plans? You are predicting something here. You must be very specific

4. What effect does the audience's prior knowledge have on its reaction to the apparent reconciliation between Capulet and Juliet and Capulet's relief at the end of this scene?

### Act IV Scene 3

1. Why does Juliet not want the Nurse to sleep in her chamber? What does this tell us about the change in their relationship?

2. List at least 5 fears Juliet voices in this scene.

3. List 10 words in Juliet's speech that give negative connotations and foreboding.

### Act IV Scene 4

1. Why is this scene essential at this point? What does it do for the mood and irony that has developed?

## Act IV Scene 5

1. Why do you think Shakespeare has Juliet's "death" discovered by the Nurse, rather then by her mother or father?

2. How do Capulet and Lady Capulet react to Juliet's "death"? Do you have sympathy for their grief? Why or why not?

3. Paris, remember, was bringing music with which to serenade Juliet. Do you think that it should be playing in the background throughout this scene of lamentation? If so, what would be the dramatic effect?

4. The last part of this scene may seem to a modern audience both tedious, with its collection of puns, and surprising, in view of what has immediately preceded; but presumably Shakespeare had a particular purpose in putting it in at this point. What do you think his purpose was? How effective do you think it would be in the theatre? Would a modern director be justified in reducing it or even cutting it out altogether? Why or why not?

5. Has someone close to you ever died? How did the family express their grief? How did you? In what ways did their and your grief compare to that of the Capulet household?

## Guided Reading Questions

## ACT V

### Act V Scene 1

1. In what way is Romeo's premonition in line 6 ("I dreamt my lady came and found me dead") characteristic of the play as a whole?

2. Romeo has been offstage during the whole of Act IV. Why might Shakespeare have deliberately planned the structure this way?

3. How does Romeo decide to deal with his grief? What do you think of his decision? If you were Romeo's friend, how might you help him now? Have you ever had to help a distraught friend? What did you do to help? What was the outcome?

### Act V Scene 2

1. What purpose does this scene serve? Do you think what happens is convincing, or do you feel it is too contrived? Why or why not?

### Act V Scene 3

1. What type of imagery does Romeo use as he tries to open the gate of the tomb? Why is this imagery appropriate?

2. What imagery does he use when he sees Juliet? What is ironic about the lines,

> "Death, that hath sucked the honey of thy breath,
> Hath had no power yet upon thy beauty.
> Thou art not conquered; beauty's ensign yet
> Is crimson in thy lips and in thy cheeks,
> And death's sole flag is not advanced there."?

3. What do Friar Lawrence's words and actions in this scene reveal about him? Do they change the way you perceive him? How?

4. How does Juliet deal with her grief in this scene? Is there a better alternative? How would you counsel Juliet at a time like this?

5. Lady Montague is the only one of the older characters to die. Is there any significance in this? If so, what?

6. Better yet, what is significant that only young people die up to this point, and all of them die violently? (Lady Montague dies of grief, not violence) In what ways are our young people killing each other and themselves today? In what ways has violence and death affected your life?

7. Why do you think the Prince is so apparently unfeeling towards Montague? Is Montague's reaction to his son's death unnatural? Or does it hide his true feelings? Support your opinion. How would an actor convey either of these attitudes to an audience?

8. What is the mood at the end of the play? Has anything been achieved by all of the death and suffering? If so, what? If not, explain your opinion.

9. Has love been shown to be a positive or negative force in human affairs? What makes you think so?

10. What part has fate played in the story? In your opinion, who is principally responsible for what has happened?

## For Further Discussion

The following questions are for general discussion after finishing *Romeo and Juliet*. They may be used for classroom discussion as a whole, team work, or individual work. They might also be used in conjunction with any of the activities that follow this section.

1. *Romeo and Juliet* is a play which focuses our attention on the relationship between two young people but in so doing touches on the relationship between children and their parents. In its treatment of that relationship do you think the play has more to say to children or to parents?

2. How important a character do you think Friar Lawrence is? What dramatic function does he perform in the play?

3. Write detailed sketches of:
   - Benvolio
   - Mercutio
   - Tybalt
   - The Nurse

4. If you were directing the play, what particular qualities and characteristics would you be looking for in each of the actors and actresses you chose to fill the four roles mentioned in the last question? Cast the play with famous actors or people you know. What race or ethnicity would the roles lend themselves to?

5. For each of the characters listed in question 3 choose one scene in which the character plays a significant part and describe how you would direct them, paying particular attention to what you regard as crucial moments (if any) in the scene.

6. To what extent do you regard Romeo and Juliet as responsible for their own tragedy?

7. Examine the part played in their tragedy by other people and outside agencies, for example, Fate.

8. Examine the part played by comic elements and characters in *Romeo and Juliet*.

9. Romeo says, "O I am fortune's fool."(Act 3, Sc.1, line 136) How far do you agree with Romeo's description of himself?

10. If you have seen a production of the play, whether on stage, television or film, write a review of it. In your review you should pay particular attention to the suitability of the casting, the interpretation of the characters, the use of lighting, the settings and the ways in which the whole production agreed or conflicted with your own view of the play.

## Activities

The following activities can be integrated throughout the discussion of *Romeo and Juliet*, and may be used by the class as a whole, for group or individual projects, in conjunction with class or small group discussions, or in conjunction with guided reading questions or critical reading team work.

### Role Playing/Acting

1. Create contemporary situations from the text. Use the role play guidelines from examining the issues.

Write the situation on a piece of paper and give it to students to work out for 15 minutes. Then have the students present the situation as a scene in class.

2. Divide your class into as many groups as there are scenes in an act. Each group must create a frozen statue of a scene from *Romeo and Juliet* which tells the essence of that scene. Present the scenes in sequence.

3. Divide your class into groups. Take one scene from the play and have each group rewrite the scene *line by line* in contemporary, everyday language. Then have each group perform its scene. As a class, examine differences and similarities which emerge. End the activity by acting out the original scene.

4. Pretend you are a friend of Romeo or Juliet. Come up with a plan for him to win the other.

5. Create a scene between two characters in *Romeo and Juliet* who do not speak to each other in the play. Perform the scene for the class.

### Art Activities

1. Using paper plates, papier-mache, and other materials, create a mask that represents a character in *Romeo and Juliet*. Explain your design. Have classmates act out a scene from *Romeo and Juliet* using masks created by their classmates.

2. Pass out art paper, paint and brushes. Have students make an abstract painting of a character from *Romeo and Juliet*. Be sure they do not tell their classmates who their pictures represent. Then randomly hang the paintings around the room. Ask students to pick out qualities, moods, and feelings of each painting. Next have each artist identify the character his or her painting represents, and explain how the various details of the painting depict the particular character or action s/he has chosen. The students might then write papers analyzing their paintings.

Logistics: Place four student desks so that students may share paints. Cover desks with newspaper. The paintings will need to remain in the classroom until they dry. The next day, students can explain their paintings before they take them home. This part of the activity might take two days. After the papers come in, let the students enjoy having their paintings hung next to the papers. Other classes may enjoy seeing them as they come into your room at other times of the day. Yes, the room will look like a kindergarten room but your students, no matter what age, probably won't mind.

Note: The concept of abstract imagery may need to be explained to some students. Emphasize that what they are trying to capture are moods, feelings, and conflicts. They are not trying to make paintings that look like the characters. They are not trying to make their pictures look like anything specific.

3. Design and build a set model for *Romeo and Juliet*.

## Other

1. After reading this play, create a fantasy storyteller who has a magic scarf. Whoever has the scarf in hand begins the tale of *Romeo and Juliet* while others listen. If a student disagrees, he/she may take the scarf and continue the story. If the narrator gets tired, the scarf may be given to another who may refuse by saying "I wasn't there" and passing it on to someone else. Continue until the story is completely told.

A variation of this activity involves a ball. Have one student begin the story of *Romeo and Juliet* while holding the ball. The student may pass the telling of the narrative by throwing the ball to a classmate. That student must then pick up telling the story. Continue until the story is completely told.

2. Invite a professional mental health worker, such as a social worker, guidance counselor, or family therapist to discuss family dynamics and communication patterns, with particular attention on ways to improve troubled family dynamics. Following the discussion, ask the class to analyze the Capulet family's communication style and ways for improving the family dynamics.

You might do a similar guest and discussion for suicide, culture clashes and/or violence.

There are also theatrical groups that approach these issues with skits, class participation and discussion. Look into some funding to bring some of these groups to your school.

3. Place the two opposing families members on the *Oprah Winfrey Show*. What would they have to say to each other. What would the guest expert have to say. Assign the various roles to members of the class. The rest of the class plays the audience and may applaud, laugh, show dismay, ask questions, etc.

## Writing Assignments

1. What do you think happens to the surviving characters at the end of *Romeo and Juliet*? Choose one of the surviving characters and write an essay, short story, additional scene, or poem revealing the behavior and actions of that person one, five or ten years later.

2. Choose a character from the play and create an autobiographical time line of the ten most important occurrences in his/her life. Choose only ten events which are focal for that character, understanding that you must prioritize. One event may be very traumatic, such as the death of a loved one; another may be something as simple as a child's surprise birthday party. Your list should cover your character's childhood and finish with the end of the play. Order your events in sequence beginning with the earliest recollection. You may draw from information from the play, research, or even events that you might envision happening. This exercise can also be fun to do for yourself.

3. Choose a character from *Romeo and Juliet* and write an entry for his or her diary/journal, dealing with some event in the play.

4. Pretend you are a character from *Romeo and Juliet*. Write a letter to a friend about what is happening to you. Or, write to one of the characters you do not speak to on stage.

5. Write a script for the story of "Little Red Riding Hood" (another fairy tale or fable will do) in the style of William Shakespeare. Have your script acted out in class.

6. Write a paper comparing any two characters from *Romeo and Juliet*.

7. Write an essay which addresses the following questions: Who is the central character in the play? Who chiefly is to blame for the tragedy? How might the outcome have been prevented?

8. Write an essay analyzing a central theme presented in *Romeo and Juliet*.

9. Write a position paper outlining what you believe is one of the lessons to be gained from *Romeo and Juliet*.

Diane Hudson
Master Works Study of Shakespeare
***The Merchant of Venice*** Unit of Study

## Rationale

For teachers, the problem with Shakespeare's problem play, *The Merchant of Venice*, is how to treat the apparent anti-Semitism that the play seems to center around and even accept (Goddard 81). One solution is to remove the play from the secondary curriculum. An alternative is to explore *Merchant* in a way that gives the student an opportunity to examine the following opposing concepts in the framework of Shakespeare and Elizabethan England:

- appearance/reality
- love/money
- loans/interest
- revenge/mercy
- law/justice
- bond/prejudice

Researching, examining, and addressing these issues seem a profitable and exciting way to approach the study of a Shakespearean play and to examine issues that are relevant to the students' lives. Most classwork will employ cooperative learning teams which allow students to be more active in their learning. Reading and discussing selected critical essays is emphasized as a means of enabling students to analyze prose and discover ideas and as part of a system-wide Reading Across the Curriculum program. The plans can be easily adapted to a teacher-directed discussion format.

## Target Class

Sophomore English class: twenty-two college-bound students of various cultural backgrounds from a middle class suburban community most of whom have been introduced to Shakespeare and Elizabethan drama through an intensive study of *Romeo and Juliet* in their Freshman English class. The students exhibit a wide range of ability.

**Purpose**

- To develop an enthusiasm and interest in studying Shakespeare
- To examine the thematic issues in the play
- To develop an appreciation for Shakespeare as a poet
- To develop the ability to understand vocabulary used by Shakespeare
- To analyze character, motives for action
- To identify stereotypes and conventions of Elizabethan theater
- To develop research skills using a topic related to literature study
- To analyze the ideas presented in a critical essay
- To develop writing skills in the preparation of a report/paper
- To develop the ability to perform a scene for an audience

**Activities**

1. Each student will contribute to newsprint sheets posted around the room
    - metaphor list
    - simile list
    - pun list
    - Elizabethan-to-Contemporary American vocab list
    - literary allusion list

    Each student will collect these in a notebook.
2. Each student will build a vocabulary list from reading the text.
3. Each student will read a variety of critical essays analyzing *MOV*.
4. Each student will write an essay examining the topic Shylock: Villain or Scapegoat?

    In preparation for writing, each student will read Stoll's "Shylock" and Girard's "To Entrap the Wisest."

    The paper should contain specific lines from the text and supporting evidence from the critical essays; it may contain research material.
5. Each student will participate with others in presenting a scene from the play.
6. Optional research topics may include:
    - prejudice and/or scapegoating in Elizabethan England
    - moneylenders and usury
    - Venetian merchants
    - Shakespeare's sources for *MOV*

- women in men's clothes
- Christopher Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta*
- caskets in myths and fairy tales

Research should be assigned early in the unit.

## WEEK ONE

### Day 1

Students will consider the opposing concepts of love/money presented in the first act of *Merchant of Venice*. Students will have an opportunity to "try on" the opposing concepts presented in Act I using a contemporary point of view.

**Activity**

- Arrange the class in three groups.
- Give each group one "situation."

**Situation #1**: You loan money to a really close friend; the friend loses/squanders the money and can't return it. The friend asks for more money to date his/her latest heart-throb, a wealthy individual who, if he/she marries your friend, will be able to pay off all debts.. How would you respond? How would you feel/act/react if you were the close friend?

**Situation #2**: You want to marry a wildly wealthy girl/guy. However, her/his father on his death bed, fearful of all the gold-diggers he knows will pursue your beloved in marriage, leaves her/him with this legacy: the marriage partner will be the person who picks the correct box of three--one gold, one silver, one lead. How will you determine which box will win your love? How would you feel/act/react if you were the wildly wealthy girl/guy?

**Situation #3**: You don't mind lending money to your friends (you have plenty of it), but you philosophically believe people should pay you interest for the loan. Tony, a classmate, thinks you're a louse for profiting from your loans; he never charges friends interest. Tony's interest-free loans bring down the amount of interest you can charge and this makes you angry. In addition, Tony has called you names and even spit on your clothes. Now Tony is out of cash and wants to borrow money from you. How will you get your revenge? If you were Tony, what would you offer to get the loan you so desperately want?

- Brainstorm responses to questions in group.
- Groups break into pairs to improvise scenes in front of class.

Give students time establish which character they will play. Remind students to let their instincts determine what they say.

- Present improvisations.
- Students record responses to each presentation
- Class discusses presentations.

**Assignment**: Read *MOV* I.i

**Day 2**

Introduce the Elizabethan theater using first fifteen minutes (counter #0110-1130) of *Henry V* video (Olivier version) to review Elizabethan theater, players, audience, atmosphere.

**Activities**:

Cooperative learning team discussion focusing on the opposing concepts of love/money found in *MOV* I.i

**Questions**:

Describe Antonio's mood. Note his first line.
To what two reasons do Solanio and Salerio attribute Antonio's mood?
Describe Gratiano's character.
Explain Bassanio's problem.
What does Bassanio reveal about himself in his conversation with Antonio?
Describe the relationship between Bassanio and Antonio.
How does Bassanio describe Portia?
What lines express ideas about love/money?

Students write contributions on newsprint lists.

**Assignment**: read *MOV* I.ii

**Day 3**

**Activities**:

Cooperative learning team discussion focusing on the opposing concepts of love/money found in *MOV* I.ii.

**Questions**:

Was Bassanio's description of Portia accurate?
Describe Portia's mood. What are her reasons?
Explain Portia's attitude toward each of her suitors.
Describe Portia's character.
What lines express ideas about love/money?
Speculate as to why all of scene ii and parts of iii are written in prose, not blank verse.

Students write contributions on newsprint lists.

**Assignment**: read *MOV* I.iii

**Day 4**

**Activities:** Cooperative learning team discussion focusing on the opposing concepts of love/money, revenge/mercy, appearance/reality, bond/prejudice found in *MOV* I.iii.

**Questions:**

Explain the terms of the loan to Antonio.
Explain why Shylock hates Antonio.
Explain the Elizabethan prejudices and misconceptions in this scene.
Explain the conflict between Antonio and Shylock.
Describe the mood of this scene?
What lines express ideas about love/money, revenge/mercy appearance/reality, bond/prejudice?

Students write contributions on newsprint lists.

**Assignment:** read

A. D. Nuttal's "The Merchant of Venice" pp. 279-282
Freud's "The Theme of the Three Caskets"
E. E. Stoll's "Shylock" pp. 15-19

**Day 5**

Teacher directed discussion of critical essays.

**Questions:**

What is the main idea in each essay?
How does the author support that idea?
How does this information alter or enhance your understanding of the text?

**Assignment:** read *MOV* II.i-iv

plan to present a scene before the class at end of unit
- select a scene (length to be determined by teacher)
- rehearse
- present using one hand prop or costume item for each performer

## WEEK TWO

**Day 6**

**Activities:**

Cooperative learning team discussion focusing on the opposing concepts of appearance/reality, father/child, bond/prejudice, Christian/Jew? found in *MOV* II.i-iv

**Questions**:
Explain your reaction to the Prince of Morocco
Describe Portia's impression of the Prince
What problem is Launcelot debating?
What does Launcelot's "conscience" encourage him to do?
What does "the fiend" encourage him to do?
What does Launcelot reveal about Shylock?
What stereotypes does Launcelot use in his description of Shylock?
What details contribute to the tone of scene ii?
Define the term *malapropism*. Locate some examples in scene ii.
Why does Jessica decide to elope?
What does Jessica ask Launcelot to do?
Speculate as to why scene ii is written in prose.
What lines express ideas about appearance/reality, father/child, bond/prejudice, Christian/Jew?

Students write contributions on newsprint lists.

**Assignment**: read *MOV* II.v-vii

**Day 7**

**Activities**:

Cooperative learning team discussion focusing on the opposing concepts of appearance/reality, father/child, Christian/Jew, love/money? found in *MOV* II.v-vii.

**Questions**:
How do Jessica, Lorenzo, Launcelot regard Shylock?
With whom do you sympathize? Why?
Explain the riddle of the caskets
Explain the Prince's reasoning.
What lines express ideas about appearance/reality, father/child. Christian/Jew, love/money?
Students write contributions on newsprint lists.

**Assignment**: read *MOV* II.viii-III.i

**Day 8**

**Activities**:

Cooperative learning team discussion focusing on the opposing concepts of love/money, loans/interest, revenge/mercy, bond/prejudice, father/child found in *MOV* II.viii-III.i.

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**Questions:**

Describe Shylock's reaction to finding Jessica has run off with his money.

How are Shylock and Antonio contrasted in scene viii?

What are the conditions established by Portia's father should one of her suitor's fail the test of the caskets?

Why does Aragon choose the silver casket?

What news does Salerio bring in III.i?

Describe Shylock's mood? What is the cause?

Do you feel any pity for Shylock? Why?

What lines express ideas about love/money, loans/interest, revenge/mercy, bond/prejudice, father/child?

Students write contributions on newsprint lists.

**Assignment**: read *MOV* III.ii

**Day 9**

**Activities**:

Cooperative learning team discussion focusing on the opposing concepts of love/money, appearance/reality found in *MOV* III.ii.

**Questions**:

Find a passage where Portia says she loves Bassanio.

How does Portia help Bassanio choose the "right" casket?

Explain how Bassanio feels about the present Portia gives him?

Who else beside Portia and Bassanio plan to marry?

What changes the happy mood of this scene?

How does Portia offer to help Antonio?

What lines express ideas about love/money, appearance/reality?

Students write contributions on newsprint lists.

**Assignment**: read *Fiedler's* "These Be the Christian Husbands" pp. 71-84.

**Day 10**

**Activities**:

Teacher directed discussion of critical essay

**Questions**:

What is the main idea in each essay?

How does the author support that idea?

How does this information alter or enhance your understanding of the text?

**Assignment**: read *MOV* III.iii-v.

## WEEK THREE

**Day 11**
Cooperative learning team discussion focusing on the opposing concepts of love/money, loans/interest, appearance/reality, Christian/Jew found in *MOV* III.iii–v
**Questions**:

Why does Antonio believe Shylock hates him?
Why will the Venetian court require Antonio to pay the bond?
What do Portia and Nerissa plan to do?
How is the tone of scene v achieved?
What lines express ideas about love/money, loans/interest, appearance/reality, Christian/Jew?

Students write contributions on newsprint lists.
**Assignment**: read *MOV* IV.i

**Day 12, 13, and 14**
Cooperative learning team discussion focusing on the opposing concepts of law/justice, revenge/mercy, love/money, appearance/reality bond/prejudice found in *MOV* IV.i–ii
**Questions**:

What arguments does Shylock use in demanding his bond?
Is Portia merciful? Explain
Describe Antonio's attitude.
How does Portia save Antonio?
Are the judgements against Shylock fair?
What lines express ideas about law/justice, revenge/mercy, love/money, appearance/reality, bond/prejudice?

Students write contributions on newsprint lists
**Assignment**: write a newspaper account of the trial.
write a one minute broadcast byte of the trial.
read Goddard's "Portia's Failure"

**Day 15**
**Activities**:
Teacher directed discussion of critical essay
**Questions**:

What is the main idea in each essay?
How does the author support that idea?

How does this information alter or enhance your understanding of
the text?

**Assignment**: read *MOV* V.i

## WEEK FOUR

**Day 16**

Cooperative learning team discussion focusing on the opposing concepts of love/money, appearance/reality found in *MOV* V.i

**Questions**:

What do Portia and Nerissa achieve with their ring "business"?
What lines express ideas about law/justice, revenge/mercy, love/money, appearance/reality?

Students write contributions on newsprint lists

**Assignment**: work on student presentations
read Stoll's "Shylock"
read Girard's "To Entrap the Wisest"
prepare essay Shylock: Villain or Scapegoat

**Day 17**

**Activities**:

Teacher directed discussion of Stoll critical essay

**Questions**:

What is the main idea in each essay?
How does the author support that idea?
How does this information alter or enhance your understanding of the text?

**Day 18**

**Activities**:

Teacher directed discussion of Girard critical essay

**Questions**:

What is the main idea in each essay?
How does the author support that idea?
How does this information alter or enhance your understanding of the text?

**Day 19**

Written test

**Day 20**
Rehearsal day for presentations
Teams can critique each other before formaal presentation

### WEEK FOUR

**Day 20 and 21**
Scene presentations
End the study of a play where it should be--in performance.

# Elizabethan-to-Contemporary American English Glossary

| | |
|---|---|
| a' | he |
| adieu | farewell |
| ado | fuss |
| albeit | although; even if |
| anon | straightaway |
| an't | if it |
| art (verb) | are |
| aught | anything whatever; any part |
| ay | yes |
| bankrout | bankrupt |
| bechanced | should it happen |
| be God's sonties | by God's little saints |
| beseech | beg |
| beshrew | curse, blame; used as a mild curse "Bad luck to..." |
| be'st | are |
| bethink | think of |
| betimes | promptly |
| canst | can |
| cozen | cheat |
| divers | several, various, sundry |
| dost | do |
| doth | does |
| eche | eke out, lengthen |
| e'en | even |
| enow | enough |
| entreat | beg |
| ere | before |
| ergo | therefore |
| fie | an expression of impatience or disapproval |
| forsooth | in truth, in fact, indeed |
| 'gainst | against |
| goest | (do) go |
| gramercy | many thanks |
| hast | have |
| hath | has |
| hereafter | later |
| howsome'er | however |

| | |
|---|---|
| is't | is it |
| i' th' | in the |
| iwis | certainly |
| kin | relative |
| mak'st | makes |
| marry | indeed ( originally an oath by the Virgin Mary) |
| mayst | may |
| methinks | I think |
| moe | more |
| naught | nothing |
| nay | no |
| o'er | over |
| on't | of it |
| ope | open |
| o'erta'en | overtaken |
| prithee | pray thee |
| soft | hold, stay, wait |
| sooth | truth |
| stick'st (verb) | stick |
| stol'n | stolen |
| ta'en | taken |
| t' | to |
| th' | the |
| thee | you |
| thine | your |
| thither | there |
| thou | you |
| thy | your |
| 'tis | it is |
| to wit | that is to say, namely |
| 'twas | it was |
| 'tween | between |
| 'twere | it were |
| 'twill | it will |
| wanton | playful |
| whilst | while |
| whither | where |
| withal | with, together with this, at the same time |
| wont | accustomed |

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## *Merchant of Venice* Suggested Vocabulary

burghers (I.i.10)
visages (I.i.88)
superfluity (I.ii.8)
divine (I.ii.14)
lott'ry (I.ii.29)
surety (I.ii.81)
dote (I.i.109)
imputation (I.iii.14)
gratis (I.iii.41)
albeit (I.iii.58)
villain (I.iii.97)
forfeiture (I.iii.161)
gormandize (II.v.3)
rend (II.v.5)
prodigal (II.v.15)
strumpet (II.vi.16)
constant (II.vi.57)
dross (II.vii.20)
carrion (II.vii.63)
amorous (II.viii.9)
certified (II.viii.10)
miscarried (II.viii.49)
nuptial rites (II.ix.6)
solemnized (II.ix.6)
heresy (II.ix.81)
wracked (III.i.3)
prolixity (III.i.11)
usurer (III.i.45)
bond (III.i.45)
argosy (III.i.95)
wrack (III.i.98)
fourscore (III.i.102)
fortnight (III.i.119)

amity (III.ii.30)
dulcet (III.ii.51)
aloof (III.ii.58)
visages (III.ii.59)
gambols (III.ii.93)
allay (III.ii.111)
intercessors (III.iii.16)
cur (III.iii.18)
obdurate (IV.i.8)
moiety (IV.i.26)
abject (IV.i.92)
viands (IV.i.97)
inexecrable (IV.i.128)
importunity (IV.i.160)
commendation (IV.i.165)
mitigate (IV.i.202)
mar (V.i.237)
surety (V.i.254)
manna (V.i.294)

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# MASTERWORKS PROGRAM:
# SHAKESPEARE

HUNTINGTON THEATER, BOSTON & THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT
FOR THE HUMANITIES

JANUARY - APRIL, 1993

JANET LEVINE -
MILTON ACADEMY

MASTERWORKS PROGRAM in SHAKESPEARE

Janet Levine

April 13 1993

## UNIT LESSON PLAN
## THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

### A. STUDENT PROFILE

Junior class of 13 students in a high energy, highly academic independent prep school; 11 boys, two girls. Students come from diverse socio-economic backgrounds and from all over the country, yet others are from Europe, the Far East. They are a racially diverse group. There are both boarders and day students. Students are bright, articulate, with average writing skills. This is a course called Persuasion in which the emphasis is on working with writing skills. The students are aware, eager, easily challenged. For some reason this class loves Shakespeare. At their request we will be studying KING LEAR in May. (Having already studied TWELTH NIGHT; THE MERCHANT of VENICE.)

### B. PHILOSOPHY OF UNIT

The rationale for the UNIT is to demonstrate to the students that Shakespeare is a grand PERSUADER. In the course we study techniques of persuasion. With THE MERCHANT OF VENICE we look at the five dramatic unities and see how in Shakespeare's hands these become the vehicle for the expression of an extraordinary range and depth of the human condition.

C. GOALS OF UNIT

The goal of the UNIT is to engender in the students an appreciation of the masterly manner in which Shakespeare uses words to construct his material into a persuasive dramatic entity. An ancillary goal is to challenge the students with interpreting the thematic material in the play.

D. DETAILS

The introductory lessons cover the usual material of a Shakesperian background: a brief biography of Shakespeare's life, some information on Elizabethan England, a detailed look at the structure of the Globe Theater. Now that I have the materials (post-Masterworks course) I will include some speeches from THE JEW OF MALTA, and other background materials distributed by Professor Siemon.

I then introduce the idea of the five dramatic unities - plot, time, character, dialogue, place. We spend some time in discussion of how these work together, why there is a need for them all in a successful Elizabethan drama. (I do mention some post-modernists dramatic variations - Ionesco, David Mamet, so on.)

In class we read the play aloud. We go at a pace that makes all the words understandable. For homework we do short exercises around what we read in class each day: interpreting a specific speech, discussing the interaction between characters, discussing motives and actions. (I have found this a useful tool for providing the students with a good deal of preparatory written material to use for their long assignment at the end of the unit.)

We discuss Shakespeare's sources: biblical stories, historical sources, so on. I try to introduce evidence of Shakespeare's impact on the metaphorical and idiomatic language in current use. (See Appendix Four for an example.) Gradually over the weeks a fully developed picture emerges of Shakespeare's eloquence, depth of understanding of the human condition and his dramtic strength in welding the five unities together.

In the first lesson after the reading, we watch a BBC program in which two actors (Patrick Stewart is one) who have played Shylock for the same director in Royal Shakespeare Company productions of the play, discuss with the director the psycho-social basis for their interpretation (one of the actors is a Jew.) They each act out several of the key scenes in the play. It is a fascinating and thought-provoking documentary.

For the next several lessons, I break the class into groups of three, and give them specific interpretive ideas to discuss. They also have to come back to the class and present some of their own ideas.

While this is going on in the classroom, their homework assignment is to write a longer paper that incorporates the unities in THE MERCHANT, concentrating on developing a discussion around one of them.

I have included Appendices One, Two, Three, papers by Ashley Fouts, Colin Smith, and Santiago Villegas. (Uncorrected.) These are not the best-written papers in the class, but they do demonstrate much of our class discussion, as well as show how this unit leaves scope for a great deal of individual interpretation.

Ashley (Appendix One) shows the links between character and place, she concludes: '...when Bassanio marries Portia a "bridge" is made between the "fairy tale" and the "real worlds". This "bridge" serves as a middle ground on which people from both worlds can come together. This meeting creates the conflicts between personality which create the plot and dialogue which create a thorough play.'

Colin (Appendix Two) takes a real good look at the notions of anti-Semitism in the play. His examination of the role of Gratiano is his own. Clearly it arises from his being challenged to think of character and plot as dramatic unities: '... it wasn't enough for Shakespeare to show that Jews don't always fit a specific stereotype. He needed to make the liason (sic) to the Christians and their personalities... Gratiano like Shylock, is a thick-headed and merciless character...The adoption of Shylock's vocabulary by Gratiano is symbolic of how the two races teach each other mercilessness and cruelty.'

Santiago (Appendix Three) concentrates on dialogue, especially with reference to Shylock: '...dialogue gives individuality to characters, Shakespeare's dialogue gives life to Shylock...' I find Santiago's interpretation of Shylock (most of his paper) fresh and lively. His discussion of place profound: '...thus Shakespeare brings the whole concept of the unpredictable sea into play. We know Venice is a sea port built on numerous small islands, along the coast of Italy, it is no co-incidence that all the bias, animosity, conflict and hateful plot line within the story are due to the ever changing, corrupt, inconsistent, and fluctuos (sic) tides of misfortune and malice brought on by the unpredictable sea.'

---

Three weeks later I included the following question as part of this class's English exam:

PERSUASION 50 mins 40%

You are the director of the MERCHANT OF VENICE. The way you direct the actor playing SHYLOCK will determine the message you are conveying in the play. Write an essay detailing your instructions to the actor - make reference to specifics lines, specific scenes, even specific gestures and props you want the actor to use. Obviously you may refer to other characters in the play, even other Shakesperian plays. The essay must clearly convey the interpretation with which you want to persuade the audience.

The class handled the question really well. It is clear they will never forget THE MERCHANT OF VENICE and the character, Shylock.

APPENDIX ONE

A Jew in the Palace

Ashley Farts

Two entirely different types of living merge and intertwine to become a chain of connected persons in Shakespeare's The Merchant of Venice. Portia's dreamlike palace of royalty is separated from the city of Venice whith it's "realistic" cruelties. Portia rants and raves because she may "neither choose who [she] would not refuse who [she] dislike[s],"(p.21) while down in Venice Jessica simply elopes with the man of her choice. Portia wishes to be a commoner for that reason. At the same time Bassanio would love to be rich and powerful. He sees his chance to aquire the above mentioned things when he learns of the possibility of marriage to Portia, "a lady richly left."(p.17)

Bassanio has the modesty to choose the leaden chest which carries the inscription "Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath,"(p.75) because he realizes the necessity of compromise in love. With this choice he wins fair Portia and "bridges" the two different worlds of Venice and Belmont. Bassanio is close to Antonio, a venetian merchant who risked his life so that Bassanio can try to win Portia. Antonio is not able to pay back the bond on which his life is endangered so Bassanio must ask for the help of his new, and luckily rich, wife. Bassanio's love for his friend Antonio draws Portia into the town of Venice.

In the town of Venice people are portrayed as being rugged because they have to work hard for a living, whether justly or unjustly. Shylock is shown to be cruel and money hungry especially after the loss of his daughter. He greedily wishes her "dead at [his] foot and the jewels in her ear."(p.99) Shylock seems to have been nice at one point, but since then society has made him cruel and unforgiving. Shylock admits he "would be friends with you [Antonio] and have [his] love"(p.37) but only a few days before, Antonio had spat on him and called him "dog." Antonio had done such a thing because society condoned and even encouraged prejudiced behavior toward Shylock. Shylock's religion earnes him some discredit, but most he earns by his personality. Only Shylock would truly seek revenge by attempting to extract one pound of flesh from another man instead of taking twice the money owed to him. Shylock's need for revenge on Christians is caused by Jessica's departure. It is then that Shylock decides that he will make Antonio "look to his bond."(p.97)

On the other hand, Jessica is not shunned because of her religion or even as a result of her father's wrong-doing. She is easily accepted by the Christians, in fact a Christian, Lorenzo, even falls in love with her. She is deemed "wise, fair, and true"(p.73) by Lorenzo, and "no Jew"(p.73) by Gratiano.

Jessica's life is full of unstabilities, yet she is able to create stability out of her unstability. In general life in the city of Venice is less stable than that of the people in Belmont. Antonio has all of his fortune riding on three cargo ships. If all three are ruined, then so is he, therefore he must rely on friends to help him. Bassanio goes with him to Shylock in order to borrow money. Antonio takes a big risk with his signature of Shylock's bond, he not only risks bankruptcy, but he risks himself personally. This leads to a lot of suspense because we fear for Antonio. If Antonio were killed his death would drastically affect many other charactors in the play, this makes venetian people's lives more variable than the lives of the people of Belmont. It matters to Portia which husband she is forced to take, but not much is changed by his presence. Everyone else in Belmont will go on as usual because they do not intimately rely on each other in the way that people in Venice do.

When Portia and Nerissa cross over into the city of Venice, they link everyone together from Shylock to Portia herself. The trial scene is in a place which is similar to neither Belmont nor Venice. The court room incorporates the divinity of Belmont which is represented by Portia with the cruelness of Venice which is represented by Shylock. Neither people from Belmont nor women would normally be represented in a trial, so Portia and Nerissa must disguise themselves as males to pose as judge and clerk. Portia goes to the trial in order to help her husband's best friend, but that is not her only purpose. She wishes to prove that she can be great. She shows this intent by not being satisfied with saving Antonio, but by also taking Bassanio's ring back to let him know that it had been she who saved his friend. Portia not only tests Bassanio by seeing whether he will give her the ring, but she also makes him more obligated to her because he is forever indebted to her for the life of his friend. This selfish act of Portia is not uncharacteristic for her since we saw her acting selfishly when she was speaking of her suitors. In between these two selfish acts of hers, she tries to persuade us that she is selfless. During the trial Portia eloquently speaks of the nature of mercy, she says "it droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven."(p.155) She seems to deem mercy necessary in the trial scene, while she acts absolutely mercilessly towards her suitors. These different attitudes show Portia's fickleness, but in the end her deeds do prove to be quite good. Portia's means were not pure, but she saved Antonio and also forgave Bassanio. Although Portia forced Bassanio to give away the ring, she rightly forgave him because of his resistance to giving up the ring. It was

Portia's ingenious ideas which made the play turn out happily for everyone except Shylock.

Shakespeare persuades us that Shylock is a bad person who deserves the inhumane treatment which he receives from all of the other charactors. We do not leave the story thinking that it was wrong that Shylock was forced to give up his religion and therefore his customs, we end up seeing Shylock's "reformation" into Christian life as a triumph. Shylock's evilness is so great that it persuades even the most liberal person that his Judaism is wrong or bad. In order to persuade such a liberal person, Shylock had to be incredibly vicious and merciless. When asked if he had ready a surgeon in case of accident, he responds that it "'tis not in the bond,"(p.159) proving his wishes to kill Antonio. Shylock's eagerness to kill a person whom we beleive to be quite innocent and utterly undeserving of death shows his poor character.

In contrast to Shylock, Antonio was persuaded to be the "hero" of the play. We are made to believe that he should go unscathed by his forfeiture of the bond. Antonio should have been ready to give up his own flesh in the event that he could not pay because that is what the bond decrees. Shylock is made to seem merciless while in truth he was only fulfilling a lawful bond which Antonio signed. Antonio is naive in his faith in other people, we pity him because he does not realize other people's shortcomings. He does not understand how one person could betray another because he is so warm-hearted. Antonio experiences no drastic changes which we see. He does not grieve the loss of his ships and fortune, he does not grieve the semi-loss of his best friend, and he even does not grieve the near loss of his own life. Antonio seems stable and not easily affected by great devastations.

Unlike Antonio, Portia grieves littler things like her lack of choice of husband. That is the difference between the lives of a rich heiress and a merchant in the streets of Venice. Under normal circumstances these two would be unlikely to meet, yet with the link which Bassanio makes they aid each other. When Bassanio maries Portia a "bridge" is made between the "fairy tale" and the "real" "worlds". This "bridge" serves as a middle ground on which people from both worlds can come together. This meeting creates the conflicts between personality which create the plot and dialogue which create a thorough play.

Colin Smith
Mis Levine

JAN 13, '75.

# MERCHANT OF VENICE

## PPENDIX TWO

Shakespeare is a famous playwright. The reason for this, quite simply is the fact that he was a great playwright aswell. He had the ability to wield the five literary unities in a way that has pleased readers and theatre buffs so well that his name remains embedded the public mind even centuries after his death. throughout the pages of the Shakespearian library this man's prowess in utilizing the five unities manifests itself. Although his uses of place and time are not particulartly intruiguing, Shakespeare does the job well considering the limits of these unities. One cannot ask for much more in the way he uses time and place as metaphors of theme and as building blocks for plot. As for his use of plot, it is true that his plots are practically plagerized, but they are chosen and arranged in a fassion that entertains every type of audience and that provides a clear moral as well. Perhaps best well known is his use of language and speech. Shakespeare's signature use of poetry and prose for dialougue is accountable for a large part of the spice and sophistication in his works. Even more important to the style and power of William Shakespear, is the unity of characters. Shakespeare's characters are of a special breed. Each one of them has its own unique personality. This is humanistic beauty of the Shakespearian library, where good guys don't always where white and bad guys are rarely solid evil. It is in the complexities of these characters, there ties to each other and there relationship to good, bad and whatever lays in between, that we find the same spirit of open-mindedness as in Shakespeare's own, The Merchant of Venice. This play justly represents the his talent for communication of the theme through the character. Since the play is about not judging the book by its cover, it is only right that we proceed to examine its text for evidence of Shakespeare's excelent use of characters

A simple example of using the character against prejudice and stereotyping is the romantic relationship between Shylock the Jew's daughter Jessica and the Christian man Lorenzo. Amongst all the surrounding talk of Christians hating Jews and Jews hating Christians we find the link of true love binding these two members of the feuding religions.

This is an obvious slap in the face to racism. Surely there is something good in the Jewish woman if she can be loved by a Christian man. In addition, this couple is supported by Salerio, another Christian. He argues with Shylock on the subject of his daughter: "There is more difference between thy flesh and hers than between jet and ivory, more between your bloods than there is between red whine and Renish." Salerio admits that personality is independant of blood... of race. Further support for Jessica is shown by Antonio when she and her husband are given a promise for all of Shylocks possessions because of his efforts. Shakespeare uses these characters to introduce the idea of accepting harmonious racial differences.

Shakespeare also shows the variety of Jewish race by having a sort of spectrum of Jewish personality types. This is created using the chartacters Shylock, Jessica and Tubal, an associate of Shylock's. Shylock is one end of this spectrum...the negative end. He is at best a misguided victim of society and at worst a bloodthirsty machine. his lighter side as a victim is his reason for bearing a sort of vengful racism. "I hate him for he is a Christian...", says Shylock as he makes his prejudice plainly evident in speaking of Antonio. This hatred proves to be a reaction by the mistreatment of the Christians, however. The angry userer contradicts his prejudice in a now famous speech about the absence of human difference between Jews and Christians:

> Hath not a Jew hands, organs dimensions, senses,
> affections, passions? - fed with the same food, hurt
> with the same means, subject to the same diseases,
> healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by
> the same winter and summer as a Christian is?...

He then goes on to reveal his wish for bloody vengance:

> ...If a Jew wrong a Christian, what is his humility? Revenge. If a Christian wrong a Jew, what should his sufferance be by Christian example? Why revenge! The villainy you teach me I will execute, and it shall go hard but I will better the instruction.

Here we see a touch of shakespeare's character complexity. Although the Jew's bloodthirsty condition is evil and meciless in itself, he is this way because Christians have taught him hatred in their harsh, anti-semetic, Christian enviornment. This character is not black-or-white. As we move to the centre of this scale of Jewish personalities we come to the smaller character, Tubal. Tubal is neither truly good nor bad. In the small part he has, we see him telling news to Shylock. When he delivers good news, Shylock is joyous and when he gives bad news, naturally Shylock is naturally distraught. Although Tubal plays with his associate's emotions, he does no true harm or good and expresses no preference to either one. He is neutral. The purpose of this character, as Shakespeare has designed him, is to further express the variety of personality in one race...to topple a towering stereotype. At the other extreme of the spectrum we come to Jessica. As has already been shown, she is supported and liked by many characters. She is seen as the "good" side of the Jews. Although she is given this image by Christians, it still shows that she is greatly different from her father. She confronts this issue for herself: "...though I am a daughter to his blood, I am not to his manners." This is a plain manifestation of the difference of Jews even when close in blood and race. The Jewish spectrum is complete.

It was't enough for Shakespeare to show that Jews don't always fit a specific stereotype. He needed to make the liason to the Christians and their personalities. This bridge begins with Gratiano, A friend of Antonio and Bassanio. Gratiano, like Shylock, is a thick-headed and merciless character. During the trial scene he proves himself worthy of this description, yelling out what he deems appropriate mercy for the Jew: "A halter gratis! Nothing else for God's sake!" Even when this is ignored, Gratiano's juggernaut mind takes no hints and continues, even after judgement is passed on Shylock:

> In Christ'ning shalt thou have two godfathers.
> Had I been the judge, thou shouldst have ten more -
> To bring thee to the gallows, not to the front.

Gratiano is used as an example of the negative capabitlities of Christians. Not only does he play the role of the "bad" Christian; he shows similarity to a Jew as well. Shylock would rather recieve the useless flesh of Antonio than several times the payment of the merchant's debt. He pursues revenge without rendering an ounce of mercy. Gratiano has also demonstrated this trait. When it appears as if the judge will grant Shylock his desires, the Jew praises him: "A Daniel come to judgment! yea, a Daniel!" When the tables are turned by the very same judge, Gratiano makes use of what Shylock has said in saying, "...a second Daniel I thank thee Jew, for teaching me that word." This statement holds much underlying meaning. The adoption of Shylock's vocabulary by Gratiano is symbolic of how the two races teach eachother mercilessness and cruelty. In creating a personal rivalry between these characters, Shakespeare makes a major point. The fact that these two are so similar in mind and yet so violently opposed in society shows that the only thing left to to keep them working against eachother is their ties to their respective religions. If Antonio had never insulted Shylock and Shylock had not so readily taken out his bottled up grudge on that specific Christian merchant, There would be no trial, no sides taken and Gratiano and Shylock would just as likely be on at least peaceful terms. If religious prejudice had not goaded Antonio and Shylock into hatred, things would be business as usual. Ironically, Gratiano and Shylock have shown identical morals, so thus, the only difference in their theologies are the belief or disbelief in the idea of Jesus as the savior. This one insignificant difference has somehow completely separated these men forever. By merely putting these two characters together and having them act as they would in real life, Shakespeare has subtley but surely illustrated a great injustice of prejudice.

Once again, however, Shakespeare is not contented with the small area that the theme has covered in the play so far. He needs to add another dimension to the theme of prejudice. This dimension is woman. Not uncommon to Shakespeare is the concept of having women prove their worth in men's clothing. This is just another opprotunity to use it. Portia obviously demonstrates that she can get the job done as well as any man with her performance in the court room. She shows her knowlege of law by citing it fluently and she shows her cleverness in finding the many technicalities that end in Shylock's downfall. Quite simply, she has destroyed a stereotype, but this is not her only purpose in the story. This is not merely another example of faulty stereotyping. It is a message that prejudgement is not solely a problem for Jews, or Jews and Christians or even Jews, Christians and women. It is another Shakespearian hint that prejudgement exists everywhere and that it is wrong.

Now we come to the final frontier of a beaten theme: Antonio and Bassanio, safe from religious stereotype in the security of ever-popular Christianity. What more can we say with these two? Shakespeare has already said it with an experiment, taking two men with different attitudes of judgement and setting them free until the best man wins. At the starting line they are equal exept for Antonio's misterious melancholy: Bassiano is in debt and Antonio has gambled on his argosies. As they venture forth Antonio's over-generosity brings him to quickly set his life on the line in a bond for Bassanio's loan. He is not even certain to see those argosies again and his life is a rather high stake to play with. meanwhile Bassanio is fairly sure that he will succeed in his attempt to win portia, and the stakes are not quite as high. Antonio proves to be increasingly hasty and fallible in judging and making decisions. In dealing with Shylock, Antonio becomes angry and we find that his relationship with the Jew is not a pleasant one when Shylock recounts to him, "You call me misbeliever, cutthroat dog and spit upon my Jewish gaberdine..." Antonio is shown to be prejudiced. Bassanio however remains peacable yet skeptical of the Jew's personality: " I like not fair terms and a villain's mind." He does not judge yet, but he is not blindly accepting either. Later we find that Bassanio succedes in choosing the right casket for Portia's hand in marriage. The note on the correct casket states:

> You that choode not by the view
> Chance as fair, and choose as true.

Bassanio has won this game because he did not judge by appearances. Soon after this, news is recieved of Antonio's gambles going awry. A trend is beginning to form. In the famous court scene Antonio almost immediately makes the rash decision to give up and die because there is no hope.

> Make no moe offers, use no farther means,
> But with all breif and plain conveniency
> Let me have judgment, and the his will.

Meanwhile, Bassanio hopefully does what little he can with his money and words to convince Shylock to reconsider the bond. He has not passed judgement yet. When they have finally won, we see that if all were as quick to judge as Antonio, he would be dead. Finally, in the end Bassanio has money, love and friends. ). As for Antonio, he gains nothing more than he expected and almost lost it all. He still has no love and Bassanio is stolen from him by Portia. Shakespeare's experiment is complete and Bassanio has proven the more succesfull thanks to his post-judicial attitude. Antonio, on the other hand, is forever indebted to his friends because without them he would have lost every thing. He then realizes his grave mistake when he reads of his returning argosies. His prejudice almost cost him his life when he falsely assumed that his fortunes were lost. Naturally, all he can sputter up is, "I am dumb!" This brings us back to the tired old theme: "If you prejudge, you are dumb." No matter what you beleive, this is true simply because IT WORKS. Those who don't prejudge, more often than not, have an easier life. That is the message inherant in this experiment.

The mere use of characters in relation to eachother has proven effective in communicating a moral when in the hands of William Shakespeare. His writing prowess is now evident, as is the subsequent reason for his fame. With the addition of the other four unities, we have a story chock full of hints and metaphors for the underlying theme. I find this impressive. But even more interesting is the fact that upon leaving the theatre or putting the text down some feel as if they've been beaten over the head with this theme while others come out with a theme quite oppositte to it. This play has the potential to reveal the fault of prejudice or reaffirm one's racist beleifs. It seems that those who are already prejudiced will not wait until the whole meaning is revealed before they decide for themselves that it is anti-semetic. They cannot be convinced. That is the injustice in trying to fight an injustice. Even with a great ability to write, Shakespeare is powerless.

APPENDIX THREE

Santiago Villegas.

Ms. Levine.

1/13/92.

Shakespeare is a grandiloquent persuader, a motivator as well as a manipulator of human feelings. A quintessential example of a character through which Shakespeare manipulates the feeling of his audience is Shylock. *One is left with the thought of whether to sympathize with Shylock or to condemn him.* Judging from our class discussion, it seems that the general response towards Shylock is that of an evil, malignant villain and that perhaps Shakespeare was being anti-Semitic. But after reading the play over again, paying close heed to the main themes, it seems that Shakespeare was not being anti-Semitic at all, but on the contrary was defending the Hebrew tribe; he exemplifies the plight of discriminated minorities who are wantonly oppressed. Not only Jews, but anyone who is discriminated against due to their skin color - for instance, the Prince of Morocco. Note how Portia states "a gentle riddance," when he chooses the golden casket - or because they come from a foreign land - note how unjustly Portia disparages her suitors from France, Scotland, and Germany to Nerissa - or simply because their gender is feminine. The reason why so much doubt exists when talking about Shylock's character (*I do not doubt, for a second, that Shakespeare, did so on purpose*) is that most people have never been "disgraced, hindered, laughed, mocked, thwarted, [and] scorned," to turn around only to be insulted, to endure such hatred and be spat at, to lose every possession one has and to be prevented from speaking a single word, to have everything in your advantage only to find out in the end that you once again have failed to be revenged, these "kicks" can be endured, but not for long. The life of a religious, gender, or ethnic minority is that of "sufferance" - this is one of the predominant themes Shakespeare so subtly conveys through his unique manipulative style of persuasion.

Persuasive writers manipulate, change, and alter their reader's feelings, actions, and even moral beliefs, but to do so the writer must understand his target audience in depth. He must comprehend their "beliefs, prejudices, and interest before [he] can persuade them to follow a desired course of action" - persuasion is a "subtle form of command." {THINKING IN WRITING} Shakespeare knows his audience, he knows that anti-Semitic prejudices are prevalent in England and he knows that women are portrayed as inferior to men in society. Subsequently, Shakespeare uses such beliefs, meshing them with interdependent stylistically dramatic **unities**, to produce a subtle, prolific play that expounds a *social message*. Shakespeare knows his audience and the major "flaws" of their **time**. He blends these marred beliefs with a story line to persuade and illustrate that women are as capable as, if not better than, men (by having both Portia and Nerissa dressing up as men to save their husbands) and furthermore Shakespeare demonstrates the malevolence of racism, discrimination, and anti-Semitism by illustrating the plight of a poor ailing, victimized Jew.

In addition, Shakespeare creates and exemplifies his theme(s) by using the five interwoven dramatic unities : dialogue, setting, plot, character, and time.* **Dialogue** gives individuality to characters, *Shakespeare's* dialogue gives *life* to Shylock, from his voice the reader sees that the Jew is a stout, vivid, stalwart, audacious, an almost three-dimensional human being, he is the only persona in which the author clearly evinces, to his audience, the different lives that he (Shylock) lives : fiscal life, family life, and social life. In a sense, Shylock is more alive than his creator, for Shakespeare has died but Shylock has and will forever live in the Merchant of Venice. **Setting** is also one of the more important element in Shakespeare's plays. After reading both "Twelfth Night" and "The Merchant of Venice," a similarity in both plays' settings is clearly evident- both plays take place in Illyria and Venice respectively, both on sea coasts, thus Shakespeare brings the whole concept of the **unpredictable sea** into play. We know that Venice is a sea port city built on numerous small islands, along the coast of Italy, it is no coincidence that all the bias, animosity, conflict, and hateful plot line within the story are due to the ever changing, corrupt, inconsistent, and fluctuous tides of misfortune and malice brought on by the unpredictable sea. While all the love and comical scenes, all marriages and the musical love stories take place in the almost enchanted, fantasy remote world of Belmont, it almost seems that Belmont is the only peaceful place in this wicked world that mainly consists of *waters*. Portia says so herself, approaching Belmont from Venice, "that light we see is burning in my hall, how far that little candle throws his beams! So shines a good deed in a naughty world." (P. 187, Lines 98-100) Belmont is a haven of benignity and good fortune, where good deeds are in control of destiny. From Belmont, the damnation of Antonio and Jessica are surmounted and in Belmont, Bassanio betroths Portia. Shakespeare creates and uses the **plot** of the three caskets as a stepping stone to emphasize his *major theme of religious, gender, and ethnic racism*, the purpose of the three caskets is to illustrate the flaw in humans, the need to differentiate and discriminate metals, possessions, and people, solely on their appearances. "All that glisters is not gold" is the moral Shakespeare tries to convey.

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* "I've briefly discussed the unity of time in the latter paragraph and the unity of character will be discussed in the following paragraph."

Another point Shakespeare tries to convey is the idea of revenge. If you kick a good-natured "dog" constantly over an extended period of time, the day will arrive when the dog does not run away but turns around and viciously bites you. Likewise if a person, who bears no bias, is constantly discriminated against, berated, kicked and spat upon, treated so and called a "cur," the day will arrive when all his sympathy, philanthropy, kindness, love, and **character** he possesses in his heart will be obviated by the malignities, he was so taught. Then, he will turn around and beat the "teacher of that malice" with the same stick this newly created misanthrope was beaten with. Shylock, the mistreated Jew, professes and exercises such Christianity teaching to retaliate against the Christian social animosity towards his race - *"the villainy you teach me I will execute."* No one is born a born a malignant human, but is made so through such direct derogatory treatment. Christian society, represented by Antonio and Bassanio, bereaved Shylock's love for human kind, debauched him because of his religion and race, and deprived him of a heart. Shylock does not know what love is, only hate. Shylock's only affection seems to be in money, but not even twice nor thrice the arrears, Antonio owes him, will stop Shylock's endeavor for revenge. Shylock's servant Lancelet Gobbo and his only and precious daughter, Jessica, (whom he didn't know how to love - no paternal nor filial love existed in his family) the two closest people in his life leave him. Shylock is left alone, isolated as an outsider. Leaving the Jew to join the one thing that he so much despises for causing him ethnic insult, hatred, and ailment, -the Christian world of Bassanio- both Lancelet Gobbo and Jessica betray Shylock. Shylock is a tragic hero, a victim of Christian society. For as he eloquently says - "suff'rance is the badge of all our tribe." His endeavor for revenge on Christian Society needs no justification. (P. 35, Line 120)

Most people see the play through the perspective of the Christians, who constitute most of the human population, because it is much easier to associate with one of their kind, (remember that during the Elizabethan Era there were no Jews in England) so consequently they sympathize with Bassanio or Antonio, but one has to perceive the play through "a Jews eyes," to fully grasp Shakespeare's congent magnum opus. Perhaps if the roles of Antonio and Shylock were reversed, the audience would see the difference, most likely they would agree that Shylock should have the pound of flesh removed. Why, then, is this feeling different when Shylock is the plaintiff and Antonio is defendant? What the audience does not realize is that Shylock's malice is brought forth and created by Antonio, the instigator. When Antonio pleads with Shylock to lend him money, the Jew reminds him of all the injury and humiliation Antonio has caused him; calling him a dog, spitting in his face and [scorning] his nation. But instead of seeing the compassionate and condoning side of a Christian, Antonio exults "I am as like to call thee so again, to spet on thee again, to spurn thee, too." Is This What Christian Morals Preach? It seems blatantly obviously that the Jew is not the evil, malignant villain (we thought) but the victim , kicked beyond the limit of human compassion, of bias and discrimination.

Attachment Four: From "Inside Apartheid" - Janet Levine

them, while others were just resignedly doing their duties. It never occurred to me that they might have had children of their own or a life beyond our backyard. They simply existed in a vacuum for me.

Despite my parents' apprehension, I had never felt afraid or threatened when we were left at night in the care of our maids. Sometimes men, strangers to me, would join the maid in the kitchen, and their voices would awaken me. Stumbling sleepily to the kitchen, I would be rebuffed by a sharp warning not to tell my parents of the night visitors.

One day on coming home from school I found our current maid on the verge of leaving. What could have happened? I wondered. Everything had seemed normal that morning. It transpired that my mother had accused the maid of stealing a packet of Marie biscuits (a South African brand of cookies) and would not accept her protests of innocence. I was mortified. I had hidden that packet in a drawer in my room, and despite the wrath of my mother that I knew would follow, I was so consumed with guilt that I hastened to tell my mother of my crime. She went to the maid to apologise, but the maid had already packed her belongings in two cardboard boxes tied with string. She would not stay, she said.

At the gate she told me bitterly, balancing one box on her head, "Remember that under my skin I have blood the same colour as your blood. When you white people tell lies about me, my heart burns with the same anger as yours does."

Those words came back to me about seven years later, when I was in high school. I had a small part in a production of *The Merchant of Venice*, and when I heard it for the first time, Shylock's famous speech to Salarino on the Rialto burnt inside me with a shock of recognition:

> I am a Jew! Hath not a Jew eyes? hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer as a Christian is? If you prick us, do we not bleed? if you tickle us, do we not laugh? if you poison us, do we not die? and if you wrong us, shall we not revenge? . . .

The anger and anguish of that indignant black woman became even more vivid to me than they had been on that searing day, and Shakespeare became a god for me. If he was able to capture the veracity of her feelings in Shylock's words, other things he wrote must be imbued with the same universality. A glimmering of understanding of the complicity of racism dawned on me then.

But my awakening was a gradual process, not unlike piecing together a complex puzzle over the years of my childhood. And the picture began to emerge from the puzzle when I was in the fourth grade. My teacher that year, Mr. Broderick, was an Englishman who had been a war hero, chosen as a pilot for a mission to bomb strategic German dams, one of the famous Dam Busters later immortalised in book and film. He was our hero, too. And it was he who first opened my eyes to the injustices of apartheid. By then we had moved to Emmarentia. Fortuitously, so had Mr. Broderick, so I was fortunate to have him as my teacher at Emmarentia Primary School for two more years. He imbued me with ambition to write and with a feel for political argument. He simply ignored the official, rigourously worded injunctions against straying from the set syllabus, designed to implement the apartheid indoctrination inherent in the Christian National education that was taught in all state schools.

The format of all state school instruction, black and white, was and is Christian (Calvinist) and National (Afrikaner hegemony). Nowhere was this slant more evident than in the study of history, civic affairs, and social studies. My English-speaking classmates—white education being segregated along language lines—were as deeply suspicious of this blatantly racist material as I was. The interminable account of the Great Trek that our history texts gave us each year was received with healthy scepticism. The compulsory annual pilgrimages by bus to the shrine of Afrikaner nationalism near Pretoria, the Voortrekker Monument, left us with an irreverent, scoffing feeling about Afrikaners and things Afrikaans. It was "their" monument, to "their" battles and killings of black warriors, from whom "they" took the land. We were interlopers. At all times the Afrikaner Nationalist version of history was seen to have

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

# Introduction to Shakespeare:

## Midsummer Night's Dream

Jane Trask
Carroll School
Lincoln, Mass.

| HUMAN BEINGS | | FAIRIES |
|---|---|---|
| Upper class | Country bumpkins | |
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Day 1: Familiarization with names

Teacher writes the names of all the characters in Midsummer Night's Dream on the blackboard, in random order. The blackboard will look like this:

Titania Starveling Peaseblossom

Theseus Cobweb Philostrate Moth

Hippolyta Helena Egeus Mustardseed

Puck Lysander Snout Demetrius Oberon

Flute Hermia Nick Bottom Snug Peter Quince

Students each have a sheet divided into categories, like this:

| Human beings | | Fairies |
|---|---|---|
| upper class | country bumpkins | |
| | | |

Students choose any name and decide which category it belongs to. Names should be chosen because they appeal to a particular student, or because he thinks he can read the name, or for any reason at all. Teacher will guide discussion, giving hints or suggestions as needed, so that each name ends up in its correct place on the paper. Peaseblossom and Cobweb will probably clearly be fairies, Nick Bottom and Peter Quince will probably clearly be country bumpkins, Theseus and Helena will probably clearly be upper class humans, but there may be some lively discussion about Puck, Flute, Hermia, Titania, and others.

Students will write each name on their paper, as agreement is reached on each character. At the end of the lesson, each student will have a complete list of characters and will have become familiar with the names.

FEAR

MAGIC CHARM

CELEBRATION

FAIRY MOTION

LOVE

INSULT

FLOWERS

*and other plants*

Cut apart. Can be mounted on cardboard.

Give a complete set to each student.

Day 2: Familiarization with Shakespeare's language

Students each have cards on their desks, labeled as follows:

LOVE
INSULT
FAIRY MOTION
MAGIC CHARM
CELEBRATION
FEAR
FLOWERS AND PLANTS

Teacher holds a box full of quotations, draws one out and reads it aloud.

Students check their cards, decide what Shakespeare is talking about in the quotation they just heard, and hold up the appropriate card. Quotes can be read again, or several times, if the meaning is not clear. There may be some discussion about what is meant, and some quotations may apply to more than one category.

At the end of this lesson, without taxing their reading, students should have begun to develop a familiarity with Shakespearean language. Listening skills, rather than decoding skills, will have been used.

Quotations to be used are on following pages. Each quotation, at least in part, is found in the "Shakespeare for Young People" edition of Midsummer's Night Dream. Some are in shortened form in this edition and have been expanded here to return the to their original length. This has been done to give students the experience of the rhythm and richness of the language.

This is not intended as a lesson in vocabulary or grammar. Exact syntactical understanding of the lines is not the aim, and it is suggested that a minimum of time be spent on the details of the language structure. The aim is to get a sense of what is meant by listening to the flow and rhythm of the words.

## INSULTS

Out, dog! Out, cur! Thou drivest me past the bounds
Of maiden's patience. Hermia Act 111

Hang off, thou cat, thou burr! Vile thing, let loose,
Or I will shake thee from me like a serpent! Lysander Act 111

Out, loathed medecine! Hated poison, hence! Lysander Act 111

O me! You juggler! You canker-blossom! Hermia Act 111

Fie, fie! You counterfeit! You puppet, you! Helena Act 111

Get you gone, you dwarf!
You minimus, of hindering knot-grass made!
You bead, you acorn! Lysander Act 111

How low am I, thou painted maypole? Hermia Act 111

## FAIRY MOTION

Over hill, over dale,
  Thorough brush, thorough brier,
Over park, over pale,
  Thorough flood, thorough fire,
I do wander everywhere
Swifter then the moon's sphere. Fairy Act 11

I'll put a girdle round about the earth
In forty minutes! Puck Act 11

I am that merry wanderer of the night. Puck Act 11

I go, I go, look how I go!
Swifter than arrow from the TArtar's bow! Puck Act 111

Up and down, up and down,
I will lead them up and down;
I am feared in field and town.
Goblin, lean them up and down! Puck Act 111

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## LOVE

Ay me! for aught that ever I could read,
Could ever hear by tale or history,
The course of true love never did run smooth.
Lysander Act 1

I frown upon him, yet he loves me still.
Hermia Act 1

O! Wilt thou darkling leave me? Do not so.
Helena Act 11

And, all my powers, address your love and might
To honour Helen, and to be her knight.
Lysander Act 11

What angel wakes me from my flowery bed?
I pray thee, gentle mortal, sing again:
Mine ear is much enamoured of thy note,
So is mine eye enthralled to thy shape.
Titania Act 111

Thou art as wise as thou art beautiful!
Titania Act 111

You thief of love! What, have you come by night
And stolen my love's heart from him?
Hermia Act 111

But, my good lord, I wot not by what power -
But by some power it is - my love to Hermia
Melted as doth the snow ...
And all the faith, the virtue of my heart,
The object and the pleasure of mine eye,
Is only Helena!
Demetrius Act 1V

## CELEBRATION

But I will wed thee in another key,
With pomp, with triumph, and with reveling.
Theseus Act 1

The king doth keep his revels here tonight.
Puck Act 11

Away with us to Athens: three and three,
We'll hold a feast in great solemnity.
Theseus Act 1V

## FEAR

Help me, Lysander! Help me! Do thy best
To pluck this crawling serpent from my breast.
Ay me, for pity, what a dream was here!
Lysander, look how I do quake with fear.
Hermia Act 11

O monstrous! O strange! We are haunted.
Pray, masters, fly! Masters, help!
Peter Quince Act 11

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Day 3: Linking characters to language

This is the first lesson that involves any degree of reading on the students' part.

#1 Teacher tells the story of Act I, up to the part where the rustics enter to rehearse:

> Theseus, Duke of Athens, is about to marry Hippolyta, whom he won in battle, captured, and fell in love with. Egeus comes to Theseus, angrily complaining that his daughter Hermia will not obey him and marry the man he has chosen for her, Demetrius. By Athens' law, a daughter may be punished by death or being forced to live as a nun, if she refuses to marry the man her father chooses. Hermia, desperately in love with Lysander, defies her father and says she would rather die or be a nun than marry Demetrius, whom she does not love. Lysander has a plan: he and Hermia will meet in the woods outside of town at night and run away together. Hermia agrees and tells her friend Helena of the plan. Helena, who loves Demetrius and is jealous of Hermia, decides to tell Demetrius of the lovers' plan, hoping to win Demetrius' favor by this.

#2 Students each choose a character they want to be, based on what they know of the plot so far.

Teacher gives each student two short passages from his chosen character.

Students read their passages silently to themselves, decide which they want to read aloud, and then stand up and read aloud.

Discussion can follow, focusing on whether the sense of the character came across. Others can try lines that have already been read, if they think they can project the character's mood. Full understanding of each word or of the grammar is not intended. This should be an experience of "catching" a character's personality and having the fun of hearing oneself and one's classmates speak these sonorous words. If time allows, and enthusiasm is high, the second speeches (probably not originally chosen because they seem too hard) can be read aloud.

For lines to use, see next page.

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## MAGIC CHARM

Fetch me that flower; the herb I showed thee once:
The juice of it on sleeping eyelids laid
Will make or man or woman madly dote
Upon the next live creature that it sees. Oberon Act 11

Churl, upon thy eyes I throw
All the power this charm doth owe! Puck Act 11

Having once this juice
I'll watch Titania when she is asleep,
And drop the liquor of it in her eyes:
The next thing then she waking looks upon,
Be it on lion, bear, or wolf, or bull,
On meddling monkey, or on busy ape,
She shall pursue it with the soul of love! Oberon Act 11

On the ground
Sleep sound;
I'll apply
To your eye,
Gentle lover, remedy. Puck Act 111

## FLOWERS AND PLANTS

Yet marked I where the bolt of Cupid fell:
It fell upon a little western flower,
Before milk-white, now purple with love's wound.
And maidens call it Love-in-idleness.
Fetch me that flower. Oberon Act 11

I know a bank whereon the wild thyme blows,
Where oxlips and the wild violet grows
Quite overcanopied with luscious woodbine,
With sweet musk-roses, and with eglantine. Oberon Act 11

Feed him with apricocks and dewberries,
With purple grapes, with figs, and mulberries. Titania Act 111

Lines from specific characters, Act I

Cut apart and hand to individual students for reading aloud.

Helena: jealous, sad, full of self-pity

① How happy some can be! Through Athens I am thought as fair as she. But what of that? Demetrius thinks not so.

② Call you me "fair"? Demetrius loves your "fair". O happy fair!

Lysander: in love, eager either to be with his love or to comfort her

① If thou lovest me, then steal forth thy father's house tomorrow night. And in the wood without the town, there will I stay for thee!

② How now, my love? The course of true love never did run smooth.

Hermia: defiant, determined not to be forced to love Demetrius

① Pardon me, but I beseech your Grace that I may know the worst if I refuse to wed Demetrius.

② I frown upon him, yet he loves me still. The more I hate, the more he follows me.

Lines from specific characters: Act I

Theseus: stern, authoritarian, in charge of things

For you, fair Hermia, look you fit your fancies to your father's will, or else the law of Athens yields you up - to death, or to a vow of single life!

Either to die the death or to endure the livery of a nun, chanting faint hymns to the cold, fruitless moon.

Egeus: angry

And, my gracious Duke, I beg, as she is mine, I may dispose of her to this gentleman ... or to her death!

Thou, thou, Lysander, thou hast by moonlight at her window sung! With cunning hast thou filched my daughter's heart!

Lysander: in love, eager either to be with his love or to comfort her

If thou lovest me, then steal forth thy father's house tomorrow night. And in the wood without the town, there will I stay for thee!

How now, my love? The course of true love never did run smooth.

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Pardon me, but I beseech your Grace that I may know the worst if I refuse to wed Demetrius.

I frown upon him, yet he loves me still. The more I hate, the more he follows me.

Demetrius is not included here, as he has only one line in this edition.

Day 4: Gaining more familiarity with the language and with the relationship between characters

#1 Read Act I, up to the point where the rustics enter.

Familiarity with the language and the plot is the goal here, not dramatic interpretation. Students remain at their desks. Parts are assigned by any method that seems appropriate to the teacher. In this edition there are eight parts for this beginning section of Act I, Theseus, Egeus, Lysander, Demetrius (who has one line), Hermia, Helena, and two announcers. Hippolyta does not speak.

#2 Who is Speaking?

Students are given lines belonging to a certain character. They read them aloud and other students try to identify who is speaking. The student who is reading knows who his character is, but the listeners do not. They must rely on what they have learned about the characters so far and their memory for the read-through they have just heard.

Lines to use:

Hippolyta, I wooed thee with my sword. But I will wed thee in another key, with pomp, with triumph, and with reveling!

Theseus

And in the wood, there my Lysander and myself shall meet. And then from Athens turn away our eyes, to seek new friends.

Hermia

Full of vexation come I, with complaint against my daughter Hermia.

Egeus

I have a widow aunt. From Athens is her house seven leagues. There, gentle Hermia, may I marry thee!

Lysander

Relent, sweet Hermia!

Demetrius

I will go tell him of fair Hermia's flight. Then to the wood will he tomorrow night pursue her.

Helena

These quotes are taken from the edition being used, "Shakespeare for Young People", as this is the version the students have just read. THus, lines that are in poetry in the original, are often is prose here.

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**Egeus**: angry

① And, my gracious Duke, I beg, as she is mine, I may dispose of her to this gentleman ... or to her death!

② Thou, thou, Lysander, thou hast by moonlight at her window sung! With cunning hast thou filched my daughter's heart!

---

**Theseus**: stern, authoritarian, in charge of things

① For you, fair Hermia, look you fit your fancies to your father's will, or else the law of Athens yields you up - to death, or to a vow of single life!

② Either to die the death or to endure the livery of a nun, chanting faint hymns to the cold, fruitless moon.

Day 5: Introduction to the rustics and preparation for comedy

#1 Students take out the charts of characters they made on the first day. By looking them over, they should be able to answer these questions:

What group of characters have we been reading? (Upperclass humans)

What groups have we not yet read? (Country bumpkins, fairies)

We are going to leave the upperclass humans for a few days and make the acquaintance of some of the funniest characters Shakespeare ever wrote: the country bumpkins. In Shakespeare's day, these people were known as "rustics".

#2 Teacher asks students to think about their favorite comedians. This can include comic strip characters, television comedy actors, animated cartoon figures, even funny characters from books. Students respond.

Students then say why these characters are funny. What is it about them that makes us laugh? Teacher writes pertinent phrases on board. The result might be something like this:

look awkward

make jokes

say silly things

use unexpected language

dress funny

act dumb

speak loudly

faces have funny expressions

show off

don't know what to do

Analyzing humor this way may be hard for students, but with some teacher guidance it should generate a list.

Teacher then goes through list, checking off the things that the rustics also do. Even though these characters were created so long ago, they do the same funny things comedians do now!

#3 Teacher asks whether the upperclass characters do these things. Students will recognize that the answer is no. Teacher points out that the bumpkins will be a contrast to the humans we have met so far ... and that is what Shakespeare intended.

**Who is speaking?**

Cut apart and give to individual students to read aloud.

Hippolyta, I wooed thee with my sword. But I will wed thee in another key, with pomp, with triumph, and with reveling!

**Theseus**

---

Full of vexation come I, with complaint against my daughter Hermia.

**Egeus**

---

Relent, sweet Hermia!

**Demetrius**

---

I have a widow aunt. From Athens is her house seven leagues. There, gentle Hermia, may I marry thee!

**Lysander**

---

And in the wood, there my Lysander and myself shall meet. And then from Athens turn away our eyes, to seek new friends.

**Hermia**

---

I will go tell him of fair Hermia's flight. Then to the wood will he tomorrow night pursue her.

**Helena**

Day 7: Introduction to the fairies

#1 Teacher writes these words on the blackboard:

quarrel revenge magic

We are going to meet the fairies in this next scene. Which word do you think represents what will happen in the scene with the fairies?

Students respond. Answers will probably mostly be magic. Discuss why this seems the most likely. Answers will be that magic is associated with fairies, and quarrels and revenge are usually things done by humans. In fact, we have seen the upper class humans quarreling (Egeus with his daughter Hermia) and demanding revenge (Theseus enacting punishment on Hermia).

Teacher tells class that all three, quarreling, revenge, and magic will happen in this coming scene with the fairies. They will also do something that is often done by humans, they will make mistakes. Do you think Shakespeare intended the fairies to be a little bit like the humans? (This is a wonderful topic for discussion and can be reintroduced later.)

#2 Discussion focusses on the quarrel. Teacher asks what students usually quarrel about. Answers will vary. With some direction, the discussion can be guided to the assumption that we often quarrel over something we want but cannot have. This is the kind of quarrel Oberon, king of the fairies, and Titania, his queen, are having. She has something that he wants to have for his own, but she won't give it up.

Teacher guides discussion to recognize that the things we want are the things that seem unusual and wonderful to us: we don't quarrel over ordinary, familiar things. What would seem unusual and wonderful to the fairies? A human baby!

#3 Question before reading : What is the revenge and who is plotting it? (Oberon plots to make Titania fall in love with something gross, to revenge himself on her for not giving him the baby. In this version, we are told of this by one of the Announcers.)

Assign parts and read Act II, up to the entrance of the Athenian lovers.

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Day 6: Exploration of the rustics

#1 Teacher gives brief explanation of who the country bumpkins are. They are not trained actors, they are not professionals, they are not paid for acting. But they are planning to put on a play. They are common folk, a tinker, a tailor, a carpenter, a weaver, a repairman. These are not high-class jobs, and these folk are uneducated fellows who happen to be friends and who think they can do a play. There is going to be a competition among various dramatic groups to see whose play will be chosen by Duke Theseus to be performed as part of his wedding ceremonies. Our friends, the rustics, think they can win. They are short on experience but long on enthusiasm!

#2 Students choose parts and read through the scene, which concludes Act I. A suggestion, to help free up students' sense of these characters and provide some contrast to the upperclass Athenians, whom they have read previously, is to have the readers sit on top of their desks as they read, or stand on their chairs. If the class is confident enough, or free enough, it might work for the readers to perform standing, in front of the rest of the class, but this might be a technique left for later.

After the initial read-through, teacher asks if any sense of specific characters' individuality has come through the lines. With some teacher guidance, the following might be generated:

Peter Quince: long-suffering, patient, seriously trying to keep his motley group organized and on topic
Nick Bottom: a show-off, thinks he can do every part
Snug: not too smart, a slow-learner
Flute: unhappy with his part, doesn't want to play a female
Snout
Starveling } (not much characterization in this edition, but teacher can reveal that these two will be hilariously funny when the play is performed)

#3 Read through the scene a second time, with different students taking the parts. Discuss whether the characters' personalities came through any better.

Read through a third time, if the class wants to. Perhaps some students will be able to add some comic gestures or voice inflections. The aim is to generate laughter in the classroom: anything that works is good theatre here!

Homework assignment: Students are asked to think of themselves as costume designers. They choose one of the bumpkins and one of the Athenians and draw pictures of them in their costumes. This will entail some thinking about how to make these people look different on the stage, how to let the audience know they are from different social classes, and how to prepare the audience for the fact that one character will be serious and another funny. The aim of this assignment in not great artwork or even acceptable costume-design, but a beginning understanding of one of the ways characters are presented as different individuals in a play.

(These drawings will be added to later, when the students encounter the fairies. Eventually they can sketch several characters from each of the groups, upperclass humans, rustics, and fairies, so that they have a beginning costume booklet. Later sketches of scenery can be added and, if the class is interested, suggestions of lighting.)

Day 9: More humor (the rustics, Puck, and Bottom's transformation)

#1 Teacher and students review the personalities of the rustics:

Peter Quince - patiently trying to organize his raggle-taggle group
Nick Bottom - too eager, boastful, talks too loud, wants to play all parts
Flute - unhappy at having to play a female part
Snug - a slow-learner
Starveling
Snout

These two have not been as clearly characterized as the others. In this edition Starveling is supposed to be fearful and nervous and Snout stupid; this is as good a way to play them as any, but students can characterize them otherwise, if they want

#2 Teacher gives an introduction to what is going to happen in this next scene.

Puck finds the rustics in the wood, rehearsing. He is not done with his trickery yet, and he will play a trick on Bottom that results in about the funniest scene in all theatre! Remember Oberon's plan to get revenge on Titania? Remember that she is asleep nearby, her eyelids sprinkled with magic dust so she will fall in love with the first thing she sees when she wakes up? Puck will have her see Nick Bottom. That would be funny enough, for a queen to fall in love with a boastful country bumpkin. But Puck transforms Bottom into ..... can you guess? What would make him the most ridiculous, hilarious lover for proud Titania?

Students make suggestions: an insect, an elephant, a clown, a tree, etc.

Get ready for the fun!!

#3 Assign parts and read Act III, up to where the lovers enter.

If students are loose and free, and ready for some acting-out, they can move around the classroom as they read this scene. It is a good one for some motion.

Discussion questions, after reading the scene:

What was the funniest moment of this scene?

What is the funniest line?

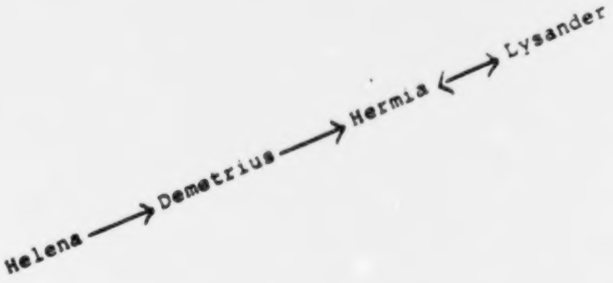
Possible choices: Thou art as wise as thou art beautiful.
(Titania to Bottom)

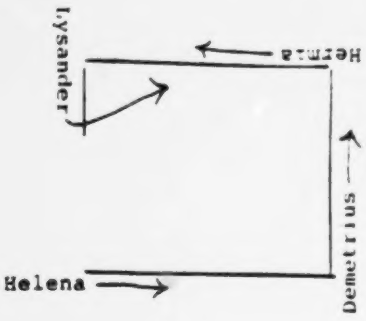
Why do they run away? THis is to make an ass of me.
(Bottom to himself)

What angel wakes me from my flowery bed?
(Titania to Bottom)

## Day 8: Fairies and lovers

#1 **Students** each draw a chart, or map, of the Athenians, showing who loves whom. This can take any format. These are two possibilities:





#2 Question before reading: Can you identify the use of magic? (Oberon throws magic dust in Titania's eyes and Puck throws magic dust in Lysander's eyes.)

Assign parts and read the rest of Act II, in which the fairies and the Athenian lovers meet in the woods.

**Students** take out their charts of who loves whom and add new lines (in red pen, or some other color) to show who loves whom now.

#3 **Teacher** guides a discussion of Helena's feelings at the end of this act. Her line to Lysander, "Wherefore this keen mockery?" indicates that she thinks he is making fun of her. She doesn't believe he really loves her. Why is this so? **Students** are challenged to remember times when someone suddenly started to treat them differently from usual. How did you feel? Especially if someone who had been mean to you all of a sudden started being nice to you, how did it make you feel? Did you think you were being mocked? Did it make you feel embarrassed? humiliated? angry?

**Homework assignment**: **Students** choose one of the fairies and sketch him (or her) costume, adding a page to their Costume Book, begun on Day 6. This is a good time to suggest a sketch of scenery as well: the court of Duke Theseus must look very differ than the woods outside of town!

## Day 11: Things begin to straighten out again

Assign parts and read Act IV. This is a short act in this edition, but it brings up wonderful topics for discussion.

Questions for discussion after reading:

- Oberon says, *Now I do begin to pity*, when he sees his elegant queen Titania sleeping with her arms wrapped around the donkey-headed Bottom.

    Does he think he has gone too far?

    Or is this Shakespeare's way of showing us, again, that these magical fairies are not so different from human beings in their feelings and their folly?

- Oberon says that he and Titania will *solemnly dance in Duke Theseus' house*.

    Are they going to be part of the wedding celebration?

    Will the humans see them?

    Have any humans seen the fairies so far? (Only Bottom, and only after he has been transformed.)

- Lysander says, as he wakes, *I swear I cannot truly say how I came here*.

    Does he think his wild love-adventure in the wood has been a dream?

    Is the whole play a dream?

    Is just the part in the wood at night a dream?

    Remembering the play's title, what do you think?

- Imagine the moment when Bottom wakes up, feeling his head for the ears he thinks he remembers having: he too thinks he has been dreaming. But what a dream! This is another very funny moment. But it is touching too, for the lowly Bottom has been elevated in his dream (if that's what it was) to a pretty lofty position, and when he wakes, he must feel a tinge of sadness and a sense of loss.

    Have you ever had dreams like this, that left you a little sad that they weren't real?

- What do you make of Bottom's plan to ask Peter Quince to write a song of his dream?

    Is this Shakespeare's way of showing that Bottom wastes no time in self-pity and accepts things as they are (unlike the Athenian lovers)?

    How do you like his pun on the title he chooses for the song, "Bottom's Dream", *because it hath no bottom*?

    Is there another pun hinted at in having the character named Bottom be the one to wear an ass' head?

*Homework assignment: Students* make a poster advertising this play. They will need to include the name of the play, its author, and a picture of one of their favorite scenes. Titania in love with a donkey is an obvious choice, but there are others, and students should simply let their memories of the fun they have had with the play guide them.

Day 10: More humor and magic, as the lovers get more mixed-up

#1 Questions before reading the next scene:

Remember Helena's anger, as she thinks Demetrius is making fun of her? Does she become more angry or less so in this scene?

Hermia also becomes pretty angry in this scene. What makes her so angry?

Puck has sprinkled magic dust in the wrong person's eyes, Lysander instead of Demetrius. How does his mistake get corrected?

> Assign parts and read the rest of Act III. Continue to use as much moving around and acting-out as the class is ready for.

#2 Questions after reading:

How could Puck's magic fog be done on stage?

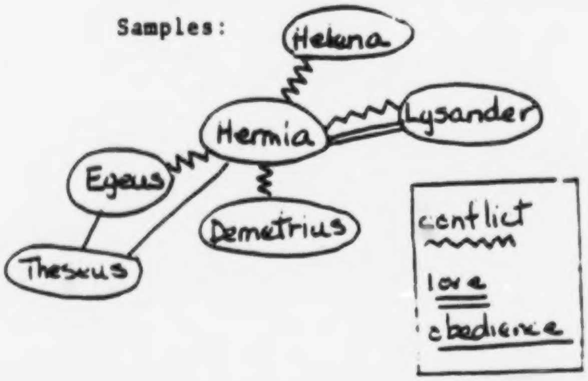
Does it make the lovers seem even more foolish and laughable to have Oberon and Puck watching them as they run, argue, and insult each other, stumbling about the wood in their confusion? In this edition, Oberon wraps himself and Puck in a magic cloak that makes them invisible, but this is not always the way it is staged. What would you do, if you were the director?

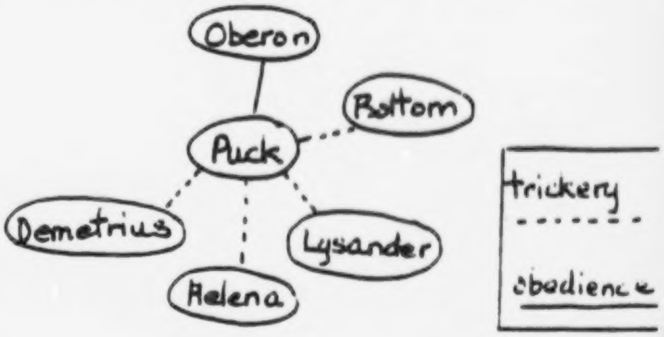
The humans in this play make some silly mistakes. But the fairies make mistakes too, just like the humans. Who is more laughable, the Athenian lovers, the country bumpkins, or the fairies?

What do you think of Puck's line, Lord, what fools these mortals be! Could this be Shakespeare's message, his comment on people, his reason for writing the play?

Homework assignment: Students choose a character and diagram that character's relationships with other characters. Indicate whether the relationship is one of conflict or trickery or a straight relationship (love, obediance, friendship, etc.). Suggested characters to choose: Hermia, Oberon, Puck, Bottom. Students may devise their own diagrammatic form, but they should include a Key that indicates the type of relationship.

Samples:





from The Signet Classic Shakespeare

Hippolyta: 'Tis strange, my Theseus, that these lovers speak of.

Theseus: More strange than true. I never may believe
These antique fables, nor these fairy toys.
Lovers and madmen have such seething brains,
Such shaping fantasies, that apprehend
More than cool reason ever comprehends.
The lunatic, the lover, and the poet
Are of imagination all compact.
One sees more devils than vast hell can hold,
That is the madman. The lover, all as frantic,
Sees Helen's beauty in a brow of Egypt.
The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven;
And as imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name.
Such tricks hath strong imagination,
That, if it would apprehend some joy,
It comprehends some bringer of that joy;
Or in the night, imagining some fear,
How easy is a bush supposed a bear!

Hippolyta: But all the story of the night told over,
And all their minds transfigured so together,
More witnesseth than fancy's images,
And grows to something of great constancy,
But, howsoever, strange and admirable.

Is Theseus, surely a man of "cool reason" and not generally comfortable with poetic flights of fancy, saying that the night's adventures in the wood have all been imagined, like a dream or a lunatic's vision?

Is Hippolyta disagreeing with Theseus, and saying that there was more to the night's doings than just some imagined dream or vision, that something has happened that means something after all, something that is real and stable and constant?

What do you think?

Day 12: Out of the woods and back to the regular world of the Duke's court

#1 Teacher explains that this scene opens with a famous speech by Duke Theseus. The words are beautiful and the poetry sings with its own high rhythm. But even Shakespearean scholars do not always agree on what it means! Our edition explains it as meaning that "lovers and crazy people have too much imagination, but a poet, through imagination, takes ideas out of the air and makes them into real stories about real people."

These words are spoken by the two Announcers, and they make a pretty good explanation of Theseus' speech.

Read aloud (either a student or the teacher) Theseus' speech.

Do you agree that this is what Theseus means?

#2 Teacher invites students to read the speech in its original version, as Shakespeare wrote it, uncut, and in its original form as poetry.

This is a challenging speech, and will certainly not be easy for students to read. But by now they should be accustomed enough to the language to work their way through it. And their ideas about its meaning may be as legitimate as anyone's. In fact, their freshness of mind, and their view of the world from their youthful perspective, may bring some unexpected insights. Their perceptions are young but they are not naive.

It is assumed that the experience of trying out a real speech, unedited, will yield students a sense of challenge and of the power of their own minds. If others have struggled with this speech, why shouldn't they try their hands at it?

The speech, and some discussion questions, are on the next page.

#3 Return to our edition. Questions before reading:

**Theseus is going to choose what play will be performed for the entertainment of the three happy married couples. Peter Quince's crew of country bumpkins are in the competition, but even the Duke's Master of Revels, Philostrate, tries to discourage him from picking this sorry troup. But Theseus does choose them. Why does he?**

**-The little play is described by its players as tedious and brief, merry and tragical. Theseus remarks that it sounds like hot ice. Is there something in this that appeals to him? Does the stern Duke Theseus have a sense of humor after all?**

**-Or is there some way in which the silliness of the bumpkins' play, its goofy cast, and its wacky combination of opposites fits perfectly into the larger play of "Midsummer Night's Dream"? Is Shakespeare telling us something about human life? Is it Shakespeare himself, speaking through Duke Theseus, who really chooses the little play?**

**Assign parts and read Act V, up to the entrance of the rustics.**

Day 14: The end of it all

Assign parts and read the final scene of Act V.

Questions after reading:

-Do you remember Oberon saying that he and Titania would dance in Duke Theseus' house? The fairies do come to the wedding celebration, don't they? But none of the humans see them, as they arrive after the married lovers have gone to bed. Why do you think this is so?

-If you were the director, would you do the scene this way? Or would you have Oberon and Titania and Puck (and perhaps other fairies) on the stage during the festivities? Would they watch the play? Would they be invisible to the humans or just hidden from their view?

-What do you think about the fairies not being seen by any of the humans, except Bottom? Why is he, the most awkward and ridiculous of them all, the one who is allowed to meet the fairies face to face?

-What do you think of Puck's addressing the audience at the close of the play? How does it make the audience feel when one of the actors steps to the edge of the stage and talks directly to them? Have you ever seen a play where this happened?

-Why does Shakespeare choose Puck to be the last actor on stage and let him speak the last lines in the play? What is it about Puck that makes him an appropriate character to bring this wonderful play to an end?

Day 13: The best comic scene in all theatre!

#1 **Teacher** comments that, whatever was said in yesterday's discussion, the most important thing about this play-within-a-play is that it is so funny! Let your imaginations run wild and get ready to laugh.

#2 Assign parts and read the play-within-a-play, up to the point where all the humans exit.

It is hoped that by this time the students will be comfortable with the characters, aware of the contrast between the rustics and the Athenians, easy with the language, and sensitized to the silliness of it all, so that they can appreciate this funniest of all scenes. **Teacher** and **students** should throw inhibition to the winds and just go with the flow.

**Homework assignment**: This final scene is a wonderful one for **students** to add a page to their costume and scenery book. By this time, more complicated drawing (and visualization on the students' part) is required, as this scene has many people on stage, all the rustics and all the Athenians. What does the Duke's court look like, all decked out for the weddings? How does the audience sit to watch the play? What do the bumpkins look like in their meagre costumes?

# Lesson Plan for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

Michael Obel-Omia
April 1993

This is a possible lesson plan for motivated seventh graders with little or no previous exposure to Shakespeare.

With this plan, I hope to instill a deep interest in Shakespeare and his other works. This can be accomplished by focusing on a biography of Shakespeare, the language of the play, some of the poetic devices employed by Shakespeare, the action and plot, and the major themes of the play.

## General recommendations for activities and testing

First ask the students what they know about Shakespeare, try to clear up the myths and talk about his most famous plays, and your favorites. Discuss why you believe he is studied and why you enjoy studying him.

One activity I did with students to peak their interest in poetry came from our class. One could also do it with this play. On the first day, cut up words from a speech in the play. Give the words to the students. Have them mouth the words and then act out the words. After they have done this, have them act out a line from a speech in the play. Place the participants in the correct order of the speech, and have them perform their lines separately. They will truly enjoy the experience.

Also after each class, have the students write down one thing they have learned that day about the play. Underneath, have them ask a question that concerns them about the play. These statements will help you to know if you have put across effectively your idea.

For testing, give short quizzes periodically which test what they have learned and what they have read at home on their own--the scenes to come. For more comprehensive tests, give them passages from the play and ask them to explain why each particular quotation is important. Ask them to identify literary terms by giving them passages from the play. Also force them to recognize words spoken by different characters. The speakers are so distinct in this play that the students should be able to recognize each character by his/her utterances.

The most effective way I have found to teach the play is to let them act out the parts each day. Allow them to memorize certain speeches and work with the language on a stage--if one is available to you. One way to begin is to give a biography of Shakespeare, another is to just jump in and start reading the play. My students love to figure out things on their own. Over the course of the play, they will ask questions, that may be answered by the information provided by Stanley Wells.

### General Biography of Shakespeare

Focus on facts that are readily obtained in the introduction of several editions: (I am using Stanley Wells' writing)

I. Youth
    A. Birth 23 April 1564 in Stratford-upon Avon, England

B. Baptism at Holy Trinity, 26 April 1564
C. Father was an up-and-coming young man who took a prominent part in administering the town's affairs
D. Father--John--married Mary Arden, who came from a family of higher social standing, about 1552
E. John's position in the community improved greatly over the years
  1. Member of glover's guild
  2. Dealt in wool and other commodities.
  3. Constable 1558
  4. Principal burgess (1559)
  5. Chamberlain (1561)
  6. Alderman (1565)
  7. Bailiff--mayor--and justice of the peace (1568)
F. Children of John and Mary include the following:
  1. William (1564-1616)
  2. Gilbert (1566-1612)
  3. Joan and Margaret died in infancy
  4. Second Joan (1569)
  5. Richard (1574)
  6. Edmund (1580)
G. William attended The King's New School in Stratford
  1. Courses taught in Latin, they learned grammar, rhetoric, logic, and classical literature
    a. Aesop's *Fables*
    b. Terence and Plautus
    c. Caesar, Cicero, Virgil, Horace, Ovid
F. These authors, the Bible, and traveling players greatly influenced him.
H. William married Ann Hathaway of Shottery in 1582
  1. 8 years his senior
  2. license obtained in Worcester court
  3. Susanna born, and baptized 26 May 1583
  4. Twins Hamnet and Judith born 2 February 1585
I. Next few years unknown to scholars. Might have taught, practiced law, acted, et cetera.

II. Intellectual and Theatrical Background
A. Period of increasing stability & prosperity in England
B. Queen Elizabeth was unifying the nation
C. Patriotic sentiment increasing
D. Continental influences were helping in the transmission of classical knowledge which we call the Renaissance
  1. First major translation of Ovid, Horace, Plutarch, Homer, Seneca, Virgil, and Heliodorus.
    a. Plutarch and Ovid influenced Shakespeare's work
  2. Holinshed's *Chronicles,* Spenser's *Faerie Queene,* Montaigne's *Essays* and Sidney's *Arcadia* also were published during this time and influenced him
E. English dramatic literature developed greatly in Shakespeare's early years. It increased in range, scope, and power.
F. Growth in the size of acting companies and in the popularity.
G. Prose for the first time becoming a rich dramatic medium
H. Growth in size of acting companies and in the popularity of theatrical entertainment encouraged ambitious plays
  1. sub-plots
  2. mixing comedy with tragedy
  3. diversified songs, dances, spectacles, and masques
I. James Burbage builds first building in England designed

primarily for theatrical performances in 1576
    1. previously companies had roamed the land playing in halls, public houses, Inns of Court, wherever
- J. During this time, boys played female roles
- K. Elizabethan theatre encouraged b/c the queen enjoyed it
    1. open roof, uncurtained stage, little scenery, rear opening, upper level--very simple structure
- L. Shakespeare's first group--Pembroke's Men 1592
- M. He joined Lord Chamberlain's Men 1594 and remained with them throughout career--some achievements of company:
    1. Shakespeare was an actor, & dramatic poet w/ company
    2. built Globe in 1599 to help their patronage
    3. survived the competition of successful children's companies in the early years of the new century
    4. acquired King James as their patron in 1603
    5. used the Blackfriars as a winter house in 1609

III. His plays
- A. Complete list of his plays available in Signet Classic Some of the more famous ones to mention:

1. Richard III (1592-93)
2. The Taming of the Shrew (1593-94)
3. Romeo and Juliet (1594-96)
4. A Midsummer Night's Dream (1594-96)
5. The Merchant of Venice (1596-97)
6. 1 Henry IV (1597)
7. 2 Henry IV (1597-98)
8. Much Ado About Nothing (1598-1600)
9. Henry V (1598-99)
10. Julius Caesar (1599)
11. As You Like It (1599-1600)
12. Twelfth Night (1599-1600)
13. Hamlet (1600-01)
14. Othello (1603-04)
15. Measure for Measure (1604)
16. King Lear (1605-06)
17. Macbeth (1605-06)
18. The Winter's Tale (1610-11)
19. The Tempest (1611-12)

IV. Start Discussing the play
- A. Let the students read the parts aloud
- B. Discuss the following ideas from I,i:
    1. How Duke Theseus and Queen Hippolyta were once foes, but now speak longingly of their nuptials
        a. language of both: Theseus painful and longing, Hippolyta comforting and supportive (their language is filled with metaphors and images
    2. The many mentions of the moon and how it sets the scene for the play--moon, silver, heavens
    3. The immediate and dangerous conflict brought to bear by Egeus--discuss how literal-minded Egeus is, and how unbending he is (language is flat and direct)
    4. The rigors of Athens' laws and penalties, and the desire to follow them strictly while in Athens
    5. Discuss Hermia's words and quality--discuss how bravely she faces her impending death
        a. Discuss her choices and her resolute nature
    6. Focus on Lysander and his nimble and direct words
        a. how well suited they are for one another--virtue sides w/ them for Demetrius is as

stiff as Egeus and inconstant (Helena)

7. Work w/ the complication as Lysander and Hermia plan to run away
8. Emphasize some of the themes of the play
    a. law, its penalties, and how it works--who uses it, wants it applied
    b. love, the complications of love
        1. who gets to love, gets to choose love, etc
        2. how smoothly or unsmoothly it runs...
    c. contrast strict Athens with near the woods and the woods (Note how we move from Athens w/ the noble citizens to near woods with mechanics to into woods w/ fairies
    d. contrast reality w/ fantasy
    e. discuss the traits of each characters
        1. strengths/weaknesses
        2. desires/demands
        3. power/subjectiveness to powers
        4. virtue/lack of virtue
        5. honor/desire to keep promises
        6. relationships and their importance
9. Discuss literary terms and devices introduced
    a. similes, I,i,5
    b. metaphors, I,i,183
    c. allusions, I,i,169
    d. stichomythia I,i,136-140
    e. soliloquy I,i,226-248

Continue on to I,ii. You might wish to review some of the themes discussed the first day. After each session, you might wish to have the students discuss the themes of the previous day. As you know, I have only scratched the surface of possible themes to discuss.

I. Have the students choose parts and read the mechanics
    A. Discuss comic relief and the importance of the sub-plot
    B. Discuss the legend of Pyramus and Thisby
        1. Is it an appropriate play for a wedding of two formerly hostile persons?
    C. Work with the rude mechanics--their language, their earnestness, their desire to perform, their motive
        a. question why they are near the woods to perform
    D. Emphasize some the themes of the play, particularly this sub-plot
        1. The need for these mechanics
        2. Moving closer to the woods and fantasy--actors and their ability to move us to an unreal setting, which we accept as real and viable
        3. Prose versus verse writing--difference in language between them and the nobility
        4. Focus on the mechanics and
            a. Bottom--tool of his trade, core on which a skein of yarn is wound--suggests the basic element of something--as he is a common man his practicality courage and blind confidence underlie much human achievement
            b. Quince--typical English artisan--tactful director, resourceful reviser--name refers to tools of the carpentry trade, wooden wedges called quoins or quines
            c. Snug--tightly fitting, appropriate for a joiner

            - 1. mute during rehearsal and slow of study
        - d. Snout--tinker's most common task was repairing the spouts, snouts of kettles and teapots
        - e. Flute--name refers to the nozzle through which a bellows expels air--name also suggests the high-pitched quality of the character's voice
        - f. Starveling--least competent of the mechanics, can only utter two lines before he reverts to prose to inform the audience what his lines should have been--name refers to proverbially skinny nature of tailors
- E. Literary terms
    - 1. malapropism, I,ii,36
    - 2. oxymoron, I,ii,53
- F. Begin reading and discussing II,i
    - 1. The complete movement into the woods and fantasy
    - 2. Moonlight and the Athenian wood--used to draw the mood --words used to suggest enchantment
    - 3. Introduction of King Oberon and Queen Titania
        - a. married couple drawn to a couple who plans to marry--mutual interest
        - b. quarreling over a child
            - 1. good time to begin discussing/reviewing who keeps his word in this play--Titania, Helena, and Hermia have made promises they intend to keep
            - 2. contrast w/ those who have broken their word or ask others to break their word Egeus, Oberon, and Demetrius
        - c. how they disturb nature w/ their quarrel
        - d. the magic of the language and the meter
            - 1. juxtaposition of Oberon's and Titania's language w/ folk-goblin language
    - 4. Contrast Oberon's force and power to Titania's power and her ability to reconcile (II,i,140)
        - a. discuss the relationship of both
        - b. compare to Theseus' and Hippolyta's
        - c. Discuss love/marriage in four distinct stages
            - 1. pinning for love, Helena for Demetrius
            - 2. frustrated love, Lysander and Hermia
            - 3. blossoming love, Theseus and Hippolyta
            - 4. soured love, Oberon and Titania
    - 5. Discuss the other plot concerning the young lovers
        - a. the plaintive language of Helena
        - b. the harsh threats and uncivil tongue of Demetrius--his allusion to the city as a place of civility and the alleged danger of the woods (II,i,215)
        - c. the changing of their own nature--Helena wooing Demetrius (II,231-234)
        - d. the "chivalry" of Oberon and his desire to help poor Helena
    - 6. Literary terms
        - a. personification, II,i,90
        - b. pun, II,i,192

Act II,ii

- I. Mischief and complication of the plot
    - A. Oberon's mischief in annoiting Titania's eyes
    - B. Contrast the dainty sprites and the odious night creatures--rose-worms, owls, bats Oberon's wish for

Titania to fall in love w/ a"vile thing"--is this love?
- C. Transition to quaint, idyll, trusting, tender love of Lysander and Hermia--true lovers who can be trusted w/o chaperons--contrast Demetrius' ugly words to Helena from earlier in the act
- D. The dream of Hermia, and the biblical imagery of her final couplet
    - 1. this complication makes her dream, nightmarish

Act III,i
- I. Return to the mechanics
    - A. After reading the scene, focus on the verbal banter prevalent in this scene.
        - 1. work with the mechanics desire to represent literally beasts and people on stage
    - B. Work with the physical humor of the ass's head put on by Puck
    - C. Also work with the words, eye, view, and reason these words have been important throughout the play, but now are especially important
    - D. Discuss Titania falling in love with a "vile thing"
        - 1. why does Shakespeare so embarrass one of the few characters who keeps her word?
- II. Act III,ii, IV,i
    - A. Work with the four young people and their trials
        - 1. the stronger, harsher language: anger b/c of confusion and wrong mates
        - 2. men divided between anxiety to protect Helena from the attacks of Hermia and their desire to attack each other
        - 3. Oberon and Puck keep the youths apart by imitating their voices, and then allowing them to fall asleep--the images of sleep return
    - B. IV,i Focus on the renewed amity between Oberon and Titania
        - 1. how do they resolve their differences? Work with the power structure--why does she relent
            - a. discuss music's place in Shakespeare's works, IV,i,86--compare Lear
        - 2. Discuss how we return to law w/ the appearance of Theseus and Egeus--the wind horn slowly wakes them from this slumber
            - a. Law of Athens is seemingly in the woods
            - b. discuss Egeus' demand for law in a place where Athens' law holds no jurisdiction
            - c. Theseus suspends Athens' laws--his omnipotent power must be explored
        - 3. the surprise Lysander expresses symbolizes the mates confusion--the final question before the resolution
        - 4. discuss Lysander's truthful character as he asserts his desire to elope
        - 5. Demetrius' language becomes more poetic as his just and right love for Helena blossoms
            - a. ask the kids to contrast his words w/ his earlier utterances
            - b. focus on his sickness imagery
        - 6. Theseus demands that the lovers join his wedding
            - a. they prepare for a happy resolution

- 7. Lastly focus on Bottom's speech--compare to 1 Corinthians 2:7-9--hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world
  - a. seems to wake from a dream--as all the characters have done
  - b. language to consider "asleep," "vision," "dream" and "eye"--the major words of the play along w/ moon
  - c. senses the profoundness of the dream
  - d. character of Bottom: sympathetic figure, not too pompous, civil, not patronizing to fellow artisans, courteous to attendants, leader
  - e. comedy lies in the contrast between his circumstances and his lack of awareness, but he is not a victim
  - f. courage makes him admirable & amusing
  - g. Only mortal to meet fairies--discuss
    - 1. rightfully moved by experience

Act IV,ii

- I. The mechanics return first to lament then to celebrate Bottom's return--now everything is set for the concluding act five
  - A. The marriage has happened w/o our seeing it

Act V,i

- I. The weaving together of the plots
  - A. Strangeness of events mentioned and questioned in a light-hearted fashion
  - B. Note their excitement to "wear away (the) long age of three hours/between (their) aftersupper and bedtime, V,i,34-35
  - C. The selection of Pyramus and Thisby--might be a good time to read Ovid's rendition of the story to the students.
  - D. Note Theseus' grandness, his justice, his sympathy and sageness when dealing w/ the potentially poorly performed play, V,i,89-105
  - E. The play w/i the play and its importance
    - 1. how they mock it
    - 2. how they enjoy it
    - 3. how the plot of love differs greatly
    - 4. the earnestness of the players and the enjoyment of the viewers
  - F. literary terms
    - 1. eye-rhyme, V,i,21-22
    - 2. Alliteration, V,i,146
    - 3. malediction V,i,180-181

Major theme--to be discussed at your leisure

- I. All things in play relate to theme of marriage
  - A. Theseus' and Hippolyta's nuptials
  - B. Fairies have come to Athens b/c of marriage
  - C. The artisan's performance is intended for it
  - D. Hermia's judgment and climax of lover's story is scheduled to coincide w/ it
  - E. The young lovers are married along with ducal couple
- II. Characters
- III. Masques, dances, a play w/i a play, and music

Susan C. Feeney
April 13, 1993

## CURRICULUM UNIT:

## Julius Caesar

### 1. Philosophy/ rationale for the unit:

The unit is designed to expose tenth grade students to the value of text-crawling. As they read, study, paraphrase, scrutinize, discuss, interpret, and perform short passages from Julius Caesar, highly skilled students will recognize the serious undertones of lively comic word play, understand the important characterization techniques playwrights use, and appreciate the text for its historical, poetic, and stylistic features while maintaining a constant focus on its dramaturgical possibilities. All students will develop a short performance piece, analyze a scene, update Shakespearean text (and characters), determine the play's tragic hero, discuss the thematic concerns of the author, evaluate persuasive techniques employed by Brutus and Antony, report on details of the plot as a member of an eyewitness news team, conduct research on the play's setting, Shakespeare's literary and dramatic accomplishments, and/or the Elizabethan era, and respond to the play on a critical and creative level (in a well-structured literary or creative essay). Through activities such as these, students will come to realize that the study of Julius Caesar is worth the challenge.

> *"I do fear the people choose Caesar for their king."*
>
> William Shakespeare

2. **Grade Level/ Course**

*Small, suburban, college-prep high school where tenth grade students in the most accelerated sections of English exhibit a wide range of talent and ability

3. **Goals/ purpose of the unit.**

*To practice verbalizing one's reaction to Shakespearean drama in discussion and in performance.

*To illustrate how moments of decision bring forth the strengths and weaknesses in one's character.

*To develop sensitivity toward techniques of character development and the use of imagery in writing.

*To stimulate students to a greater awareness of the inferential information, subtleties in character, thematic undercurrents, abstract concepts, and tonal hues in classic works of literature.

*To encourage student involvement in meaningful and entertaining classroom activities.

*To help students recognize the universality of human experience by stating parallels between the events in the play and current events. (EXAMPLE: Act III,iii, Cinna is accosted by the mob; mob rule in Los Angeles riots)

*To portray a typical day at the theater in Elizabethan London.

*To illustrate the relationship of various social classes, and of men and women, to the Elizabethan theater as a social institution.

*To improve reading proficiency and expand vocabulary.

*To define and identify significant literary techniques, including pun, tone, sonnet, metaphor, symbol, imagery, setting, foreshadowing, theme, blank verse, suspense, mood, and figure of speech.

*To practice the following critical thinking and writing skills:

a. Responding to criticism
b. Analyzing effects of literary techniques
c. Evaluating a play
d. Analyzing a character
e. Writing a research report

# *Julius Caesar*

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

## CHARACTERS

| | |
|---|---|
| **Julius Caesar** | |
| **Octavius Caesar** | Triumvirs after the death of Julius Caesar |
| **Marcus Antonius** | |
| **M. Aemilius Lepidus** | |
| **Cicero** | Senators |
| **Publius** | |
| **Popilius Lena** | |
| **Marcus Brutus** | Conspirators against Julius Caesar |
| **Cassius** | |
| **Casca** | |
| **Trebonius** | |
| **Ligarius** | |
| **Decius Brutus** | |
| **Metellus Cimber** | |
| **Cinna** | |
| **Flavius and Marullus** | Tribunes of the people |
| **Artemidorus of Cnidos** | a teacher of Rhetoric |
| **A Soothsayer** | |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Cinna** | a poet |
| **Another Poet** | |
| **Lucilius** | Friends to Brutus and Cassius |
| **Titinius** | |
| **Messala** | |
| **Young Cato** | |
| **Volumnius** | |
| **Varro** | Servants to Brutus |
| **Clitus** | |
| **Claudius** | |
| **Strato** | |
| **Lucius** | |
| **Dardanius** | |
| **Pindarus** | servant to Cassius |
| **Calpurnia** | wife to Caesar |
| **Portia** | wife to Brutus |
| **The Ghost of Caesar** | |
| **Senators, Citizens, Guards, Attendants, Servants, etc.** | |

***Time:*** 44 B.C.

***Place:*** Rome; the camp near Sardis; the plains of Philippi

4. **Details of the lesson plan.**

a) The first assignment sheet included in this curriculum should be distributed after the class has read Julius Caesar, Act I. It will not take them long to select --or accept-- an episode for close study and analysis. (Note: Since the length and level of difficulty vary from one episode to another, you may choose to assign appropriate scenes to small groups --or a pair-- of students)

In order to illustrate the purpose of this activity, read (with minimal intonation or emotion) Act I, ii, 249-272. Ask the students to characterize Casca's remarks about the "rabblement" who "clapped their chapped hands and threw up sweaty nightcaps, and uttered such a deal of stinking breath because Caesar refused the crown that it had, almost, choked Caesar;..." They also should be able to detect Cassius' sarcasm when he uses the phrase "falling sickness" to refer to the tendency to bow down before Caesar. Ask for three volunteers to read the selection again; this reading should demonstrate the intensity of each character's emotion, purpose, confusion, or dismay.

One class period should provide adequate time for steps designated A-C on the student **SHAKESPEARE ALIVE!** handout.

Although additional preparation and discussion can take place outside of class, students will most likely make use of approximately ten more minutes at the beginning of class on the second day. Call their attention to the directions (next to letter D on the handout). While the group assigned to Act I,i may retain the powerful imagery at the end of the scene (where Flavius compares Caesar to a bird), they should also employ contemporary diction.

Before each group dramatizes an episode, they should announce the exact location of the scene they plan to enact. Members of the "audience" should read the actual text as they witness the group's performance of it. This will help the class to better appreciate the "players'" interpretative statements; providing the context as well as the original script, it should also facilitate their understanding of the play.

b) One-two Day lesson Plan

**SHAKESPEARE ALIVE!**

**Bring A Scene To Life**
**Julius Caesar, Act I**

*Student handout identifies the purpose and method for this two day curriculum.

# SHAKESPEARE ALIVE!

**ENGLISH 10**
**Ms. Feeney**

## Bring A Scene To Life
## Julius Caesar, Act I

Purpose: to paraphrase, interpret, and appreciate the language and artistry of Shakespeare's dramatic work

Method:

A. Using the list below as a reference, select an episode from Act I.

**SCENE 1** A street in Rome.

The play begins on February 15, the religious feast of Lupercal. Today the people have a particular reason for celebrating. Julius Caesar has just returned to Rome after a long civil war in which he defeated the forces of Pompey, his rival for power. Caesar now has the opportunity to take full control of Rome.

*In this opening scene, a group of workmen, in their best clothes, celebrate in the streets. They are joyful over Caesar's victory. The workers meet two tribunes- government officials- who supported Pompey. The tribunes express their anger at the celebration.

**SCENE 2** A public place in Rome.

*As Caesar attends the traditional race at the festival of Lupercal, a soothsayer warns him to beware the ides of March. When Caesar leaves, Cassius and Brutus speak.

*Cassius tries to turn Brutus against Caesar by using flattery, examples of Caesar's weaknesses, and sarcasm about Caesar's power.

*Caesar passes by again, expressing his distrust of Cassius.

*Cassius and Brutus learn of Caesar's rejection of a crown the people of Rome have offered him. They agree to meet again to discuss what must be done about Caesar.

*Alone on stage, Cassius delivers a speech. The thoughts he expresses in this soliloquy are thoughts he would not want Brutus to know about.

**SCENE 3** A street in Rome.

It is the night of March 14.

*Amid violent thunder and lightening, a terrified Casca fears that the storm and other omens predict terrible events to come.

*Cassius interprets the storm as a sign that Caesar must be overthrown. Cassius and Casca agree that Caesar's rise to power must be stopped by any means.

*Cinna, another plotter, enters, and they discuss how to persuade Brutus to follow their plan.

B. Assign the roles to members of your group.

C. Working together, read the text and interpret its meaning. You should use a dictionary to look up any obscure words (*the notes from the editor will be helpful too). Pay close attention to statements that reveal **character.** Consider the speaker's **tone**.

D. You will "bring a scene to life" at this point. Retaining key phrases and memorable imagery, dramatize the scene in modern, everyday, approachable English (...because that is the long and short of it!). The best performances will demonstrate an understanding of character, tone, situation, and language.

c) Evaluative Process

There are various ways to measure achievement and seriousness of purpose during the two or three day activity:

***Participation** in small group discussions could be closely monitored. The students should be developing a script of some sort, and everyone should contribute in one way or another.

***Performance** of the episode can reveal the depth of their tex-crawling. If the performance does not illuminate anything significant, the players should be able to answer questions about the characters and situation. The questions could be teacher or student-generated.

*Finally, this activity offers a marvelous opportunity to review the details of character, situation, language, and plot contained in Julius Caesar, Act I. A **written evaluation** in the form of a quiz (or test) on the same material will evaluate the success of this dramatic, student-centered, tool for review and discussion. As an alternative--or an additional activity-- students could compose a critical evaluation of the best performance piece. Depending upon the makeup of your class, this type of evaluation could measure the level of comprehension, foster attentiveness and a greater appreciation of the effort put forth in each episode, and may serve to strengthen the performances due to a heightened sense of competition.

---

## Act II

In a five act play, the first act usually presents the exposition- the background information- and introduces the characters, the setting, and the conflict. The second act then presents the rising action- the part of the story where conflicts become obvious, suspense builds, and characters struggle to resolve their problems.

After the performance pieces, students generally understand the central concerns of the author. The three activities used for the second act are designed to highlight the suspense and illuminate the conflicts at work. In addition to the **Analyzing a Scene**, **Music for a Tragedy**, and **Updating a Scene** curriculum ideas, I would also suggest asking students to compile a list of Caesar's statements. Eventually students may write them on the blackboard or poster board so that they become a part of your classroom decor for a couple of days. This may help them to recognize some of the more famous statements from the play (and also help them to recognize his arrogance in the play----which may be contrasted with the historical record)

## Analyzing a Scene:

### Brutus: Master, Husband, Citizen-Conspirator

**Act II,i** This scene takes place in Brutus' orchard in Rome. It is a few hours before dawn on March 15- the ides of March. Brutus, unable to sleep, walks in his garden. He faces a crucial decision: either to continue living under the tyranny of Caesar or to kill Caesar and thus end his rule. While considering the problem, Brutus receives an anonymous letter (from Cassius) suggesting that Brutus take action against Caesar. His fear that Rome may lose its freedom overcomes his admiration for Caesar, and at last he agrees to join with Cassius and the others in their plan to assassinate Caesar the next day.

Directions:

1. Reread Act II, scene 1, and then on a scale of 1 to 10 rate Brutus in three areas: as a master of his household, as the husband of Portia, as a citizen leading the conspiracy against Caesar.
2. Again, using only Act II, scene 1, give evidence which justifies your rating.

Brutus as Master: ______________________

______________________________________________________

______________________________________________________

______________________________________________________

______________________________________________________

______________________________________________________

Brutus as Husband: ______________________

______________________________________________________

______________________________________________________

______________________________________________________

______________________________________________________

______________________________________________________

Brutus as Citizen-Conspirator: ____________

______________________________________________________

______________________________________________________

______________________________________________________

## Act II, scene 1

Brutus as Master:

*demanding, receiving respect

-(opening lines) Brutus ordering Lucius to light a candle in his study and report back to him

-as a Roman patrician and praetor, Brutus speaks formally and briefly (doesn't waste words)

*compassionate

-(later) Lucius is asleep on the job. Brutus, rather surprisingly, forgives the servant saying "It's no matter. Enjoy the honey-heavy dew of slumber."

Brutus as Husband:

*Considering the subordinate position of women in Roman times, it is rather surprising to find Portia so outspoken in her demands to know what is disturbing Brutus and his sleep. It is apparent that Portia talks to Brutus in this manner out of love (wounds herself). Brutus shows remorse for not having confided in her and shows his true love for her when he says "O ye gods, render me worthy of this noble wife."

*They seem to love each other; excellent marriage

Brutus as Citizen-Conspirator:

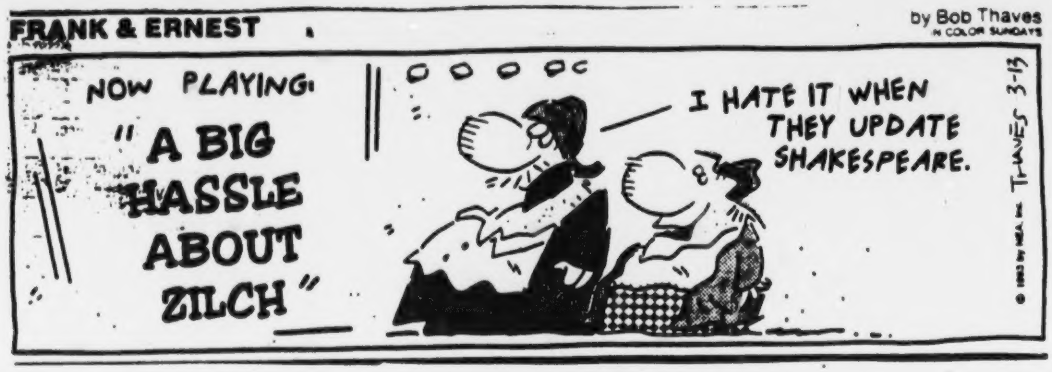
*Roman citizen; Brutus is highly regarded as a noble and moral person

*Recall Act I, scene 3: Casca says "Oh, he sits high in all people's hearts." to which Cassius responds "Him and his worth and our great need of him/ You have right well conceited."

*Act II, scene 1: Cassius says again, this time to Brutus "...no man here/ But honors you, and everyone doth wish/ You had that opinion of yourself/ Which every noble Roman bears of you

*Conspirator: Stoicism-philosophy in which the mind is separated from the body and reliance upon thinking and reason supplants emotion and passion.

-essential character flaw: idealistic naivete in dealing with real matters in the real world (this becomes evident in his first soliloquy)


FRANK & ERNEST
by Bob Thaves
IN COLOR SUNDAYS
NOW PLAYING: "A BIG HASSLE ABOUT ZILCH"
I HATE IT WHEN THEY UPDATE SHAKESPEARE.
THAVES 3-13

## English 10

## Julius Caesar, Act II

## Music For A Tragedy

Suppose you were selecting music for a movie or television production of The Tragedy of Julius Caesar. Find one piece of music for each of the following scenes:

*Brutus examines the reasons why Caesar has to die, Act Two, Scene 1

*Brutus speaks with Portia, Act Two, Scene 1

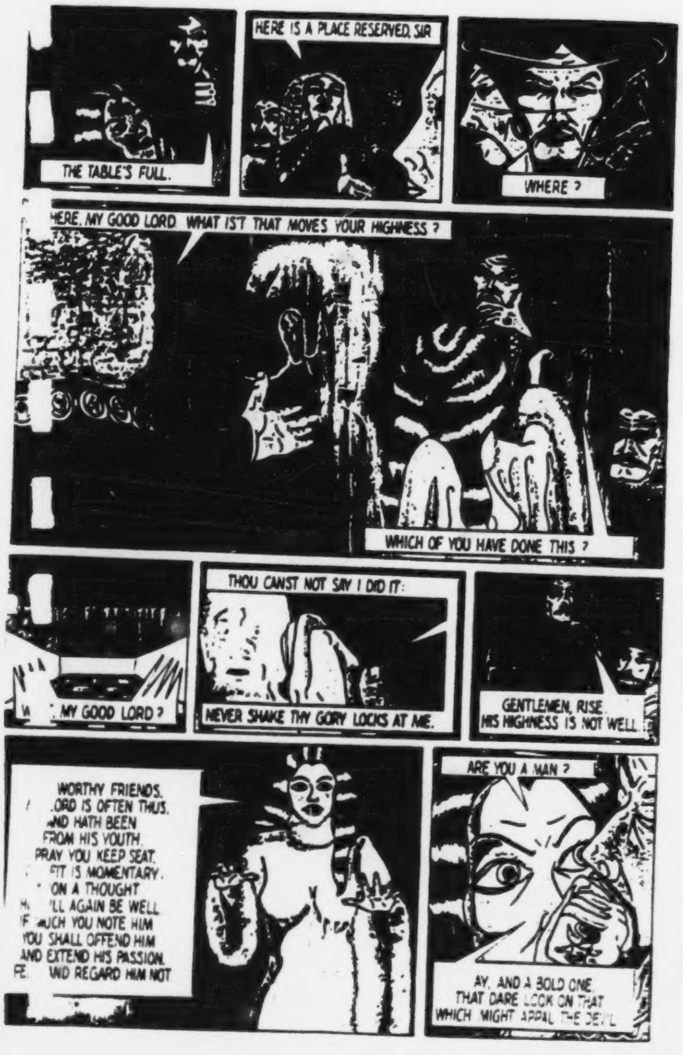
*Portia speaks to Lucius and the soothsayer, Act Two, Scene 4

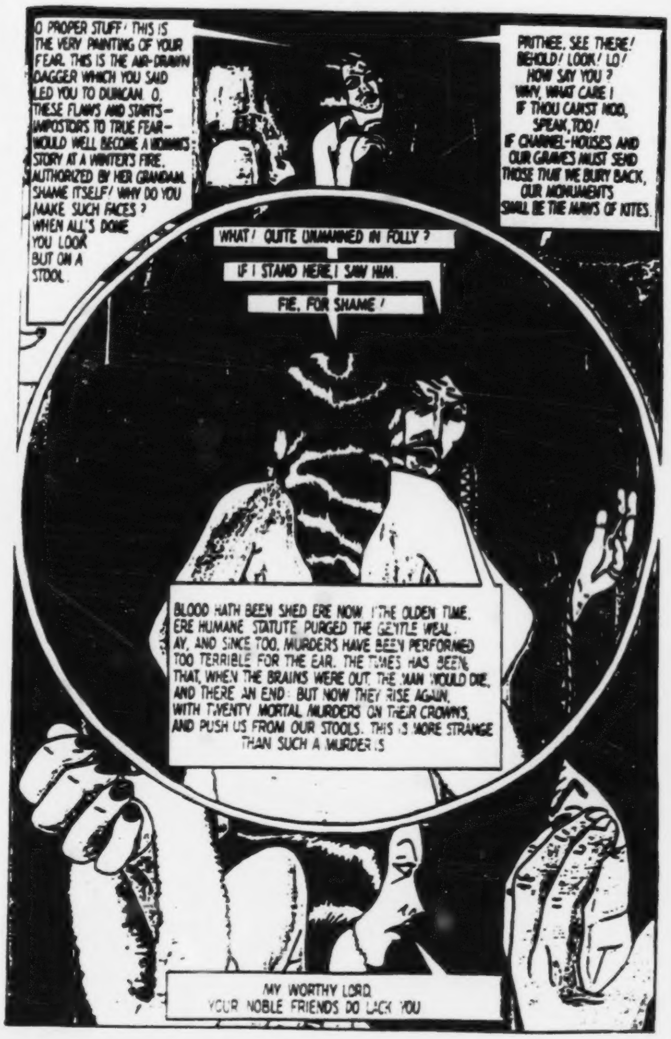
Play each selection for the class, and explain why you think it is appropriate for the scene it accompanies.

## Updating A Scene

Develop a contemporary rendition of the two domestic scenes within Act Two. Your first task is to analyze the nature of the conjugal relationships in the play. Then, contrast the relationship between Caesar and Calpurnia with the relationship between Brutus and Portia. Trying to maintain a similar set of circumstances in your skit, your twentieth century Portia should exemplify the (Roman) virtues of courage and self-sacrifice. Portia's concern for her husband's welfare is strong (as she insists on sharing his trouble). Remember that Calpurnia is alarmed by accounts of dire omens, and begs Caesar not to attend the Senate session on the Ides of March. Although history (...not Shakespeare) records that Caesar was blatantly unfaithful and came close to divorcing Calpurnia a few years after their marriage (in order to make another political alliance), Calpurnia was thought by contemporaries to have been a genuinely devoted wife; the tale of her entreaty, as reported in Shakespeare's source, Plutarch's Lives, is probably true.

If students are artistic, some may prefer to update the text of Julius Caesar in the form of a comic strip. The "excerpt" below is produced by the Oval Projects Limited (335 Kennington Road, London SE11 4QE); it depicts the banquet scene from Macbeth.


THE TABLE'S FULL.
HERE IS A PLACE RESERVED, SIR
WHERE ?
HERE, MY GOOD LORD. WHAT IS'T THAT MOVES YOUR HIGHNESS ?
WHICH OF YOU HAVE DONE THIS ?
MY GOOD LORD ?
THOU CANST NOT SAY I DID IT:
NEVER SHAKE THY GORY LOCKS AT ME.
GENTLEMEN, RISE. HIS HIGHNESS IS NOT WELL.
WORTHY FRIENDS. LORD IS OFTEN THUS. AND HATH BEEN FROM HIS YOUTH. PRAY YOU KEEP SEAT. FIT IS MOMENTARY. ON A THOUGHT 'LL AGAIN BE WELL IF MUCH YOU NOTE HIM YOU SHALL OFFEND HIM AND EXTEND HIS PASSION. AND REGARD HIM NOT
ARE YOU A MAN ?
AY, AND A BOLD ONE. THAT DARE LOOK ON THAT WHICH MIGHT APPAL THE DEVIL


O PROPER STUFF! THIS IS THE VERY PAINTING OF YOUR FEAR. THIS IS THE AIR-DRAWN DAGGER WHICH YOU SAID LED YOU TO DUNCAN. O, THESE FLAWS AND STARTS— IMPOSTORS TO TRUE FEAR— WOULD WELL BECOME A WOMAN'S STORY AT A WINTER'S FIRE, AUTHORIZED BY HER GRANDAM. SHAME ITSELF! WHY DO YOU MAKE SUCH FACES ? WHEN ALL'S DONE YOU LOOK BUT ON A STOOL.
PRITHEE, SEE THERE! BEHOLD! LOOK! LO! HOW SAY YOU ? WHY, WHAT CARE I IF THOU CANST NOD, SPEAK, TOO! IF CHARNEL-HOUSES AND OUR GRAVES MUST SEND THOSE THAT WE BURY BACK, OUR MONUMENTS SHALL BE THE MAWS OF KITES.
WHAT! QUITE UNMANNED IN FOLLY ?
IF I STAND HERE, I SAW HIM.
FIE, FOR SHAME !
BLOOD HATH BEEN SHED ERE NOW, I'THE OLDEN TIME, ERE HUMANE STATUTE PURGED THE GENTLE WEAL; AY, AND SINCE TOO, MURDERS HAVE BEEN PERFORMED TOO TERRIBLE FOR THE EAR. THE TIMES HAS BEEN, THAT, WHEN THE BRAINS WERE OUT, THE MAN WOULD DIE, AND THERE AN END: BUT NOW THEY RISE AGAIN, WITH TWENTY MORTAL MURDERS ON THEIR CROWNS, AND PUSH US FROM OUR STOOLS. THIS IS MORE STRANGE THAN SUCH A MURDER IS
MY WORTHY LORD, YOUR NOBLE FRIENDS DO LACK YOU

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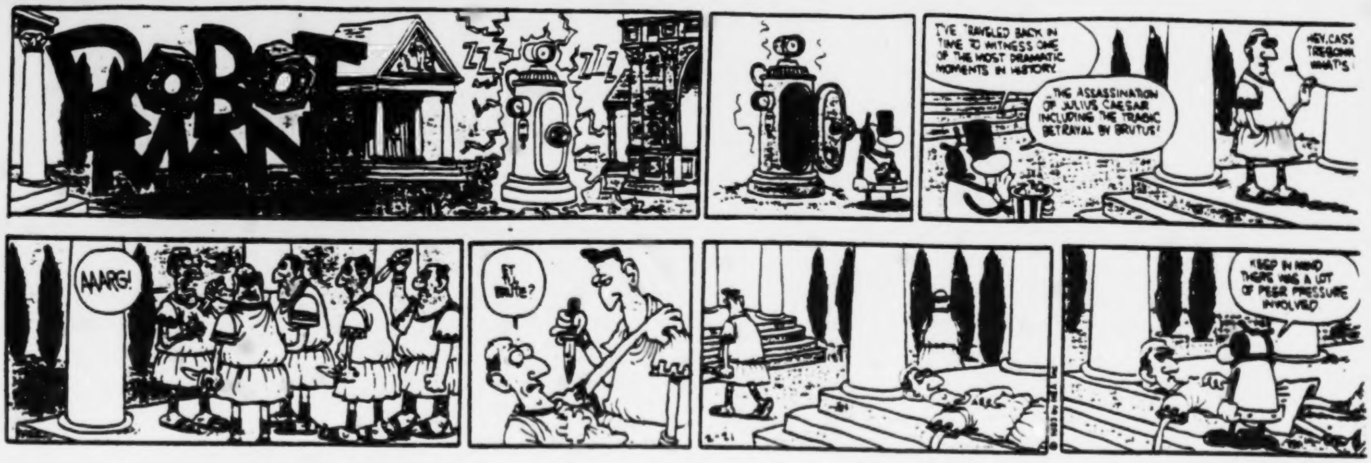
ROBOTMAN
ZZZ
ZZZ
I'VE TRAVELED BACK IN TIME TO WITNESS ONE OF THE MOST DRAMATIC MOMENTS IN HISTORY.
...THE ASSASSINATION OF JULIUS CAESAR INCLUDING THE TRAGIC BETRAYAL BY BRUTUS!
HEY, CASS TREBONI WHAT'S
AAARG!
ET TU, BRUTE?
KEEP IN MIND THERE WAS A LOT OF PEER PRESSURE INVOLVED
3-21

## Act III

Central to our study of the play is the BBC video of Julius Caesar. I also depend upon the audio cassettes produced by Drama Soundbook. We watch important scenes as we go along. For instance, after the assassination of Caesar, it is important to **witness** Brutus' interpretation and proud explanation of the liberating result of the deed. When he compels the conspirators to stoop and rub their lower arms in Caesar's blood, he is attempting to elevate the action to a sort of religious ritual. It is far more powerful to view this significant scene in the play. Similarly, I like to use Caedmon's Drama Soundbook to focus on a scene like Act I, scene 3 (when Casca, Cicero, and Cassius react to the ominous events taking place during a stormy March 14th evening). During the students' presentations (**Bring a Scene to Life** and **Updating a Scene**), we consider critical moments of the episode, and we discuss various possibilities. After playing with various alternatives, it is worthwhile to watch the video and evaluate the production. Although students tend to laugh uproariously while noble Caesar is being stabbed to death (because they claim this "low budget" film clearly used a pillow to make sure Caesar did not have a "lean and hungry look'), they are ultimately able to respond to the director's vision in a meaningful way.

In this play, as in most of Shakespeare's tragedies, the climax, or turning point, occurs in Act III. The worksheets on the following pages will enrich the student's perception of the powerful speeches delivered at Caesar's funeral. A dramatic reading is also a nice way to appreciate the rhetorical questions, verbal irony, genuine sorrow, and determination contained within the text. Again, it is worthwhile to watch this critical scene in the movie.

This is an appropriate time to provide student's with the **Two Views of Caesar: Plutarch and Shakespeare** handout. Students will appreciate the difference between literature and history when they discuss Shakespeare's use of the source.

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Name____________________________________________

## Turning the Tide: Brutus

Directions

1. Read Brutus' speech.

2. Using this speech as your guideline, fill in the outline in this handout. Your answers should be actual words from the speech itself.

3. Then discuss the following questions with your classmates:

   a. Is Brutus' speech written in poetry or prose? Why does Shakespeare choose this form?

   b. What is the overall tone of this speech?

   c. How would you describe the style of this speech?

   d. Does Brutus accomplish his reason for delivering this speech?

   e. What mistake does Brutus make in speaking first?

# Outline of Brutus' Funeral Oration

I. Introduction

I rose against Caesar not that I ______________ less, but that I ______________ more.

II. Body

A. Part I: Cause and Effect

1. Because Caesar loved me, I __________ for him, and there are ___________ for his love.

2. Because Caesar was fortunate, I ____________ for him, and there is ____________ for his fortune.

3. Because Caesar was valiant, I ____________ him, and there is ____________ for his valor.

4. Because Caesar was ambitious, I _____________ him, and there is ____________ for his ambition.

B. Part II: Rhetorical Questions

1. Who is here so___________that would be a____________?

2. Who is here so___________that would not be a____________?

3. Who is here so___________that would not love_____________?

II. Conclusion

A. Whom then have I offended?_____________________________________

B. The reasons for Caesar's death are recorded____________________

1. His glory wherein he was___________is not__________________

2. His offences for which he______________________ are not ______________

Outline of Antony's Funeral Oration

I. Introduction

Antony: "Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears. I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him."

II. Body

A. Part I: Refuting Caesar's Ambition

1. Proof 1: ____________________

2. Proof 2: ____________________

3. Proof 3: ____________________

B. First Pause:

Antony: "Bear with me./My heart is in the coffin there with Caesar,/ And I must pause till it comes back to me."

4th citizen. "...'tis certain he [Caesar] was not ambitious."

C. Part II: First Mention of Caesar's Will

1. The effects if the crowd were to read the will: ____________________

____________________

D. Second Pause

Antony descends from pulpit and crowd forms a ring around body of Caesar.

E. Part III: Description of Caesar's Corpse

1. Description of mantle: ____________________

____________________

2. Names of conspirators involved: ____________________

____________________

3. Effects of Brutus' stabbing: ____________________

____________________

4. Citizen's reactions to Antony's words: ____________________

____________________

5. Antony's self-deprecation: ____________________

____________________

F. Part IV: Contents of Caesar's Will

1. Each Roman citizen: ______________________________

______________________________

2. Citizen's private estate: ______________________________

______________________________

I. Conclusion

Antony: "Here was a Caesar! When comes such another?"

## Plutarch and Shakespeare: Two Views of Caesar

On the left side of the chart below is Plutarch's Caesar. From your reading and discussion of the play Julius Caesar fill in Shakespeare's treatment of Caesar.

| In Plutarch's Lives | In Shakespeare's Julius Caesar |
|---|---|
| 1. Caesar's life is covered from about age twenty until his death | 1. Caesar's life is covered from |
| 2. Caesar's entire military career from the Gallic wars,to civil war in Rome, to defeat of Pompey's sons in Spain is covered. | 2. Caesar's military career covers |
| 3. The setting covers all the Roman Empire traveled during Caesar's life. | 3. The setting covers |
| 4. Rome experiences a series of political changes from a republic to a limited democracy to a triumvirate to a dictatorship. | 4. Rome is governed by |
| 5. Caesar is portrayed as a man of great courage, intelligence, charm and wit. | 5. Caesar is portrayed as |
| 6. Caesar is a slightly built man with white skin and a tendency toward epilepsy but also a person who uses the hardships of war as the best remedy for his ailments. | 6. Caesar's physical condition is |
| '. Caesar is a man loved by the common people | 7. The common people |
| 8. Caesar is a man who had the complete devotion and loyalty of his soldiers. Caesar chopped firewood with his soldiers, slept on the open ground and fought side by side in battle with his men. | 8. Caesar's relationship with his soldiers |
| 9. Caesar is a great speaker and orator, second only to the famous Cicero. | 9. |
| 10. Caesar left a considerable legacy to each Roman Citizen | 10. |

## Acts IV and V

In order to appreciate the impact of the turning point, I ask students to provide an exciting vantage point from which to view the final events of the play. A news team consisting of an anchorperson, a sportscaster, and a weather forecaster is selected by random drawing or by appointment of volunteers. The members of the news team work together to create short news stories based on the previous day's reading, to write short editorials or commentaries, and to write reports on arguments, news from Rome (or Philippi), military successes and failures, and deaths.

### Format for News Copy

Reporter:

Who was involved?
What happened?
When did it happen?
Where did it happen?
Why did the situation occur?
What were the results of the situation?
Quote(s) from person interviewed:
Reporter's opinion on event:

Suggest that members of the news team spend ten or fifteen minutes talking together about the day's reading and the ensuing discussion. As they divide up the next day's news stories, encourage them to divide up the writing so that students work on more than one type of story while on the news team.

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The book review and research essay assignments are primarily considered "outside" reading projects. Of course, we spend class time reviewing expectations, available sources, acceptable process and final expectations. Additionally, students are asked to present their response to the Sophoclean tragedies and to report on their findings in the research project.

Students are asked to respond to two of the **Written Exercises** (one is supposed to be critical and the other is creative).

English 10A
Ms. Feeney

## BOOK REVIEW: THE THEBAN PLAYS

**PURPOSE:** to study the dramatic and poetic artistry of Sophocles, one of the great tragedians who lived and wrote in fifth century B.C. Athens

**METHOD:** Choose either Oedipus Rex or Antigone for close study and analysis.

Consider one of the following aspects of the dramatic work:

*comparison/contrast: Greek and Shakespearean tragedy

*role of fate (is Oedipus a helpless victim?)

*character of Creon or Jocasta

*Creon's responsiblility for his downfall

*tragic hero:Oedipus, Creon, or Antigone

*comparison: Antigone/Creon
Antigone/Ismene

*nature of absolute power in Antigone

*purpose of the chorus

Write a six paragraph essay (including an introduction, four body paragraphs, and a conclusion) that specifically discusses one of Sophocles' plays. Refer to Chapter 14 (Warriners, pp.290-310) for guidelines and assistance. If you would like to make an appointment for a conference with me after school, please schedule one soon. Your book review is due on Wednesday, March 31, 1993. It must be typewritten.

# RESEARCH PAPER

## SUGGESTED TOPICS

**Tudor Literature**

- *Sir Walter Ralegh
- *Christopher Marlowe
- *John Lyly
- *Sir Philip Sidney
- *Thomas Campion
- *Sir Philip Sidney
- *Ben Jonson

**William Shakespeare: Poet, Playwright, Actor, Businessman**

*Trace the literary history of Shakespeare's work and its reception.

*Research the autobiographical nature of Shakespeare's plays. What were some of the things going on in his life that were reflected in works you have read or heard about?

*The Theatre of Shakespeare:

- -Investigate the attitudes of London officials, the nobility, the monarch, the Puritans, and the common people toward the Globe and toward theatrical entertainments in general during the Elizabethan age.
- -Who were the "boy actors"? What part did they play in Elizabethan theater?
- -Find out more about such famous Elizabethan theaters as the Swan and the Fortune. Who owned them, how were they designed, and how successful were they? What happened to the Blackfriars after the Globe began operations?
- -Research Elizabethan audiences (the Elizabethan spectators)
- -Investigate public and private theaters in Shakespeare's time (structure of theaters, types of plays, cost of admission, audience members).
- -Describe the life of an actor of Shakespeare's time (reputation salary, life style, training, travel, working conditions)
- -Find out how theater companies were organized.
- -Research the fashions of Elizabethan times (royalty, the upper classes, merchants, and peasants); find out how these fashions were reflected in the costumes for theatrical presentations of Shakespeare's day.
- -Report on the technical aspects of Shakespeare's theatre (sound effects, music, scenery, props, lighting, special effects); compare the settings of the Elizabethan period with the elaborate set decorations of modern theaters and with the simple ones used in the contemporary theater-in-the-round

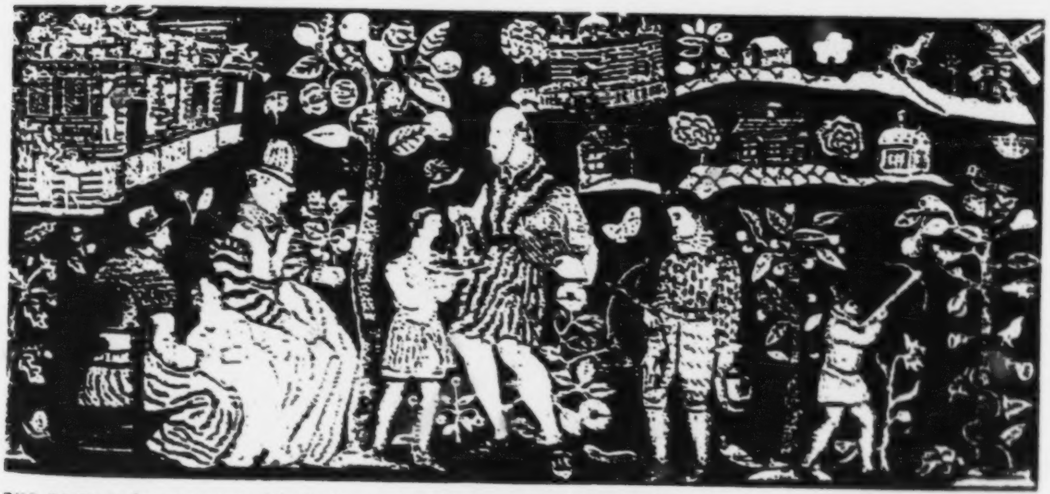
*Shakespeare's Early Comedies
*The Histories
*Shakespeare's Fellow Dramatists
(at the turn of the century)
Thomas Dekker, George Chapman, John Marston,
Thomas Heywood, Ben Jonson
*Shakespeare's Sonnets
*The Tragedies
*The Tragicomedies

## Elizabethan England

*Tudor Dynasty: Henry Tudor (1485); Wars of the Roses
Henry VIII
Edward VI
Mary I
Elizabeth I (1558-1603)

*Origins of English Drama: Mystery, Miracle, Morality Plays

*James Burbage; The Theatre
*Renaissance Period: Comparison/Contrast Between Greek Elizabethan Drama
*English supremacy over the seas: defeat of the Spanish Armada
*Elizabethan gardens
*Daily life in Elizabethan England: daily routines, home life, schooling, entertainment, diet, disease



THE FOWLER'S TRIBUTE, Elizabethan embroidery at Hardwick Hall. Even in sylvan scenes like this, everything is purposeful and has its place. The trees give fruit for the lady of the house, the children are obedient to their nurse (*left-hand corner*), and the bare-headed fowlers present their labour respectfully. The houses at the top are divided off in size and social rank, with the horse and windmill completing the hierarchy of service and duty. Very little is purely ornamental and decorative. What bound all these creations together—some nurtured, others enforced, others made—was the teaching of the Bible. God had made Adam, with Eve his subordinate, and given him charge over Eden. For the Tudor man, to maintain an ordered society and to use the flesh of birds and beasts, was not just a matter of self-interest: it was a testimony of service to God.

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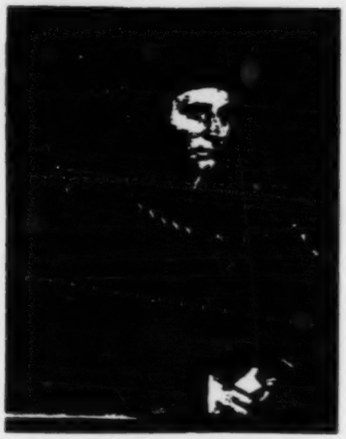
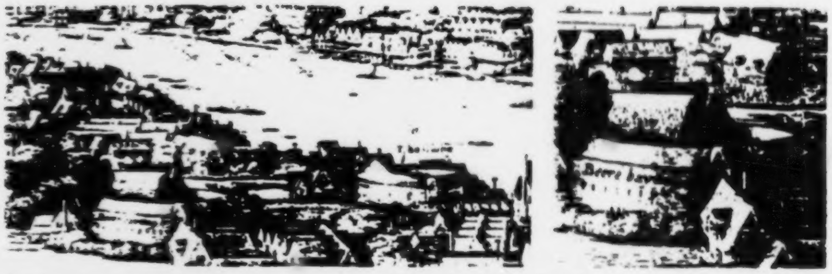
# The English Renaissance



*Sir Thomas More* by Hans Holbein the Younger. Oil.



(left) Wenceslaus Hollar's 1647 view of London shows the Globe Theatre and a "bear-baiting" arena. However, Hollar has mistakenly reversed the labels of the theater (right) and the arena.

*An Allegory of the Tudor Succession: The Family of Henry VIII.*
British school (c. 1589–95). Oil.

Yale Center for British Art
Paul Mellon Collection

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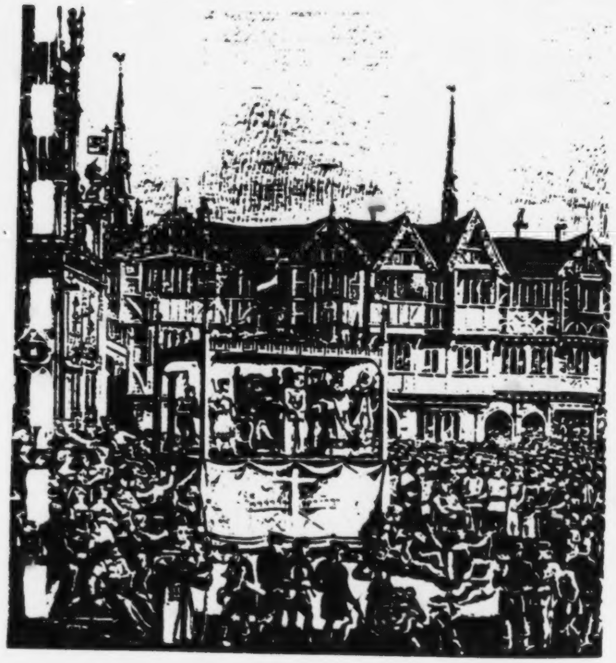
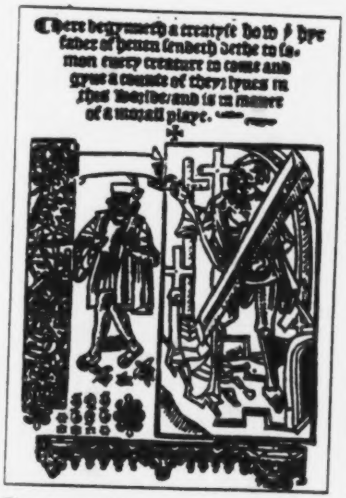
*Mystery Play, Coventry.* Engraving.

British Library.



The mystery play being enacted here is the trial of Jesus (standing, center) before Pontius Pilate (seated). High priests, wearing anachronistic bishops' miters, here present Jesus to the crowd. Note the types of people in the crowd and their behavior.



First page of *Everyman* from the Britwell copy. Engraving.

Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, D.C.

A *miracle play* was based on a miracle that occurred in a saint's life. A *mystery play* was based on a Bible story. ("Mystery" refers to the spiritual mystery of human redemption.) A *morality play* was an allegory of some phase of human life: temptation, sin, the quest for salvation, death. An *interlude* (Latin, *inter-*, "between," and *ludus*, "play") was staged between the courses of a meal or between the acts of a longer play.

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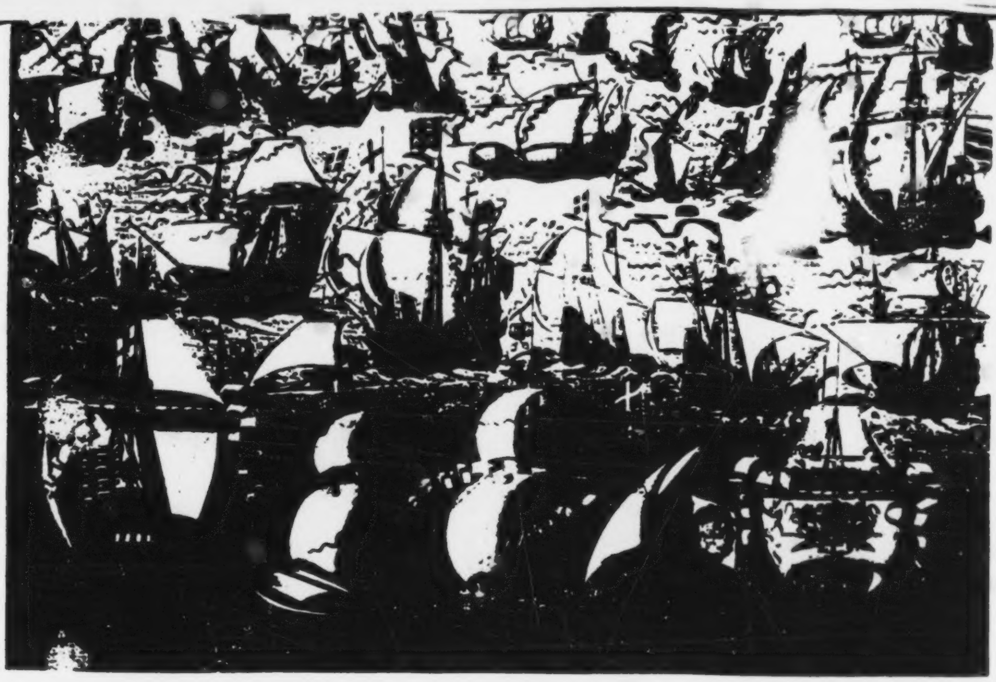


*An Engagement Between the English Fleet and the Spanish Armada.* Oil.

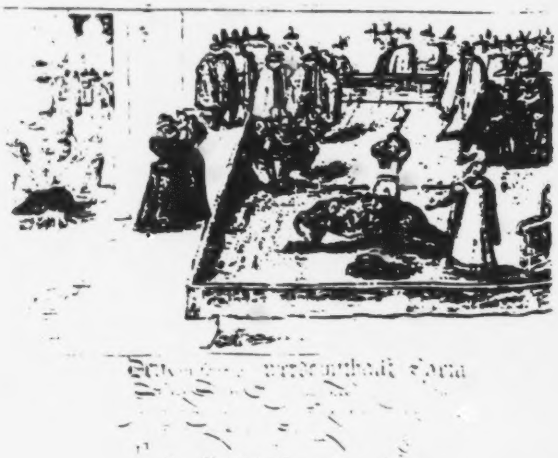
National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, England.

The Spanish Armada consisted of 130 ships and carried about 30,000 men. The Spanish ships were huge; they had to grapple enemy ships and send soldiers across the decks for hand combat. These lumbering galleons were severely battered by the guns of the smaller, more maneuverable English ships. (In the painting, a Spanish boat can be identified by its flag, which flies the papal coat of arms; see the long boat in front.) Many of the Spanish warships that survived the battle with the English were further battered by storms; only about half the original fleet limped home. Several of the ships were pounded to pieces, and five thousand Spanish sailors drowned off the west coast of Ireland. The English lost only about a hundred men and not a single ship.

### The Two Marys

Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots (1542–1587), was Elizabeth's cousin. She is not to be confused with "Bloody Mary," who was Mary Tudor (1516–1558), Elizabeth's half-sister. Though gentle personally, Mary Tudor acquired the nickname "Bloody" from the persecutions she endorsed against Protestants.

Mary Stuart was the daughter of Henry VIII's sister's son, James V. Her mother was French. Married to Francis II of France, Mary returned to Scotland in 1560, after her husband's death, to claim the throne of Scotland, which was still independent of England. Mary Stuart's ties to Spain are explained by religion: Spain and Mary Stuart were both Catholic. She was beheaded at Fotheringay on February 8, 1587.



*Execution of Mary Queen of Scots* (16th century). Drawing.

The National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh.

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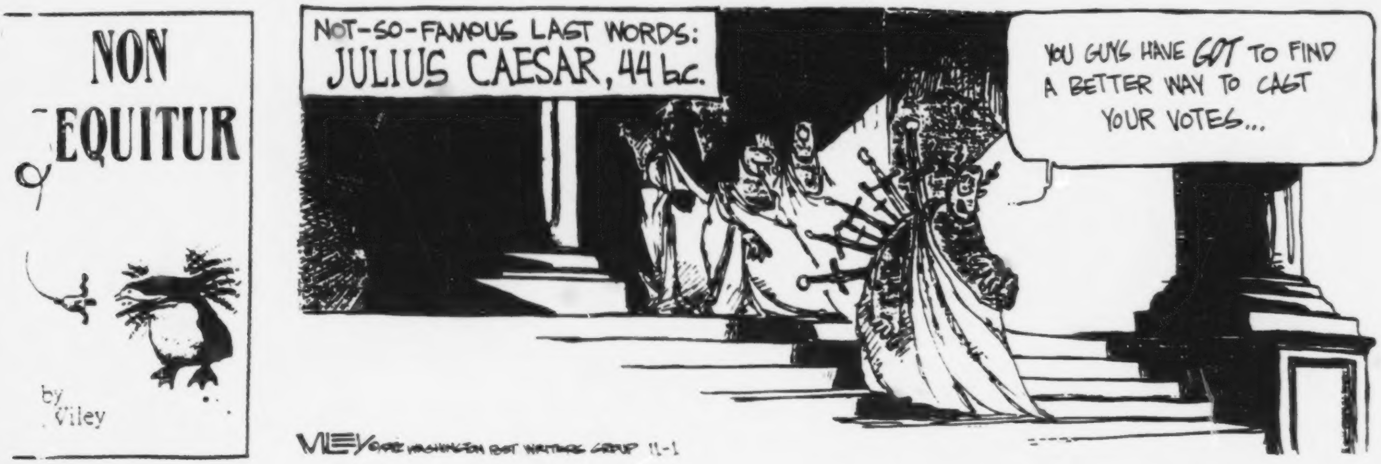
## Julius Caesar

- *Daily Life in Rome: how people dressed, where they lived and worked, how they entertained themselves, etc.
- *Portia and Calpurnia: Typical Women of Rome?
- *Shakespeare's Source: Plutarch
  Learn about the life of Julius Caesar. Include in your report information about his childhood, military accomplishments, political career, and friendship with Pompey, and some positive things he did for the lands he conquered
- *Find out about the government of Rome at the time of Caesar's death. Report on the role the Senate played, the powers Caesar had, and the voice the people of Rome had in selecting members of their government. Explain how the government structure affects developments in this play.
- *Write an essay describing a political or historical event in which an individual has been caught in a conflict of loyalties, as Brutus was in Julius Caesar. Keeping these parallels in mind, show how history does not repeat itself.
- *Famous "Soothsayers": Nostradamus, Cassandra, Jean Dixon (Research the identity of each person, and explain what he or she predicted that actually came to pass)
- *Is political assassination ever justified? (Research the assassination of John F. Kennedy, Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, etc...Explain motives and make connections whenever appropriate...)


NON SEQUITUR
by Wiley
NOT-SO-FAMOUS LAST WORDS: JULIUS CAESAR, 44 b.c.
YOU GUYS HAVE GOT TO FIND A BETTER WAY TO CAST YOUR VOTES...
WILEY WASHINGTON POST WRITERS GROUP 11-1

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## REQUIREMENTS

1. Follow the format outlined in your research paper packet every step of the way. You are being exposed to the **process** involved in writing a research essay. Each step is designed to ensure accurate representation of the facts and responsible documentation which are essential elements in a research essay.

2. Your essay should be 3-5 typewritten pages.

3. Be prepared to present your findings to the class on the day it is due. Since you will not be permitted to read your paper to the class, prepare an index card or bring a copy of your outline.

4. Although it is not necessary to include a **Works Cited** page in the first draft, your first draft should have appropriate (parenthetical) citations where they belong.

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## DUE DATES

(Potential Points)

1. **Bibliography Cards:**________________________________ (10)
2. **Note Cards (at least ______)**________________________ (15)
3. **Thesis Statement:**___________________________________ (10)
4. **Outline:**____________________________________________ (15)
5. **First Draft:**________________________________________ (50)
6. **Revised/Final Copy:**_________________________________ (100)

# WRITTEN EXERCISES

A wide choice of writing topics allow students to follow up on one aspect of Julius Caesar that each finds most intriguing. Here are writing topics I suggest after students have finished reading the play.

## A. CRITICAL RESPONSE

1. In an age before computers had been invented, before medical science understood disease, before astronomy, meteorology, and geology had learned much about the heavens and the earth, magical beliefs played an even larger role in Elizabethan daily life than they do today. In a detailed and well-structured essay, describe at least three instances of superstitious beliefs in Julius Caesar. Why do you think Shakespeare included these events in the play? Do they help to increase suspense? In what sense can they help to reveal character?

2. A tragic hero is the main character of a tragedy, a play in which the hero comes to an unhappy end. A tragic hero is usually dignified, courageous, and high ranking. The hero's downfall is caused by a tragic flaw (character weakness) or by forces beyond his or her control. Such a hero usually wins some self-knowledge and wisdom, despite defeat or even death. Decide whether Caesar or Brutus has most of the defining characteristics of the tragic hero, and write an essay which details support that description.

3. In one of the most famous scenes in Shakespeare's plays, Mark Antony successfully sways the crowd during his funeral oration for Caesar. He turns the crowd of mourners into a rioting mob. Identify and evaluate Antony's persuasive technique. Why do you think Antony was more successful than Brutus? Which phase of his speech was most effective?

4. A theme is a central idea or insight of a work of literature. It is not the same as a subject of a work, which can often be expressed in a word or two. The theme is what the writer wants you to understand about that subject. Select one of Shakespeare's themes listed below, and discuss its development in Julius Caesar. (Include at least three specific references to the play)

   *Language is a powerful weapon, and in the hands of a skilled person, it can be used to manipulate others.

   *The best intentions of good, noble men can lead to tragedy.

   *Violence and bloodshed can never have morally good results.

5. Throughout this play, Brutus makes at least three major mistakes which ultimately lose the conspirator's cause. Identify those mistakes, and decide how much responsibility for his errors are due to his philosophy, his temperament, or his narrow vision. Cite instances from the play to support your views.

6. In a brief essay, write your response to Anne Paolucci's critical comments about Julius Caesar. This excerpt is from her 1960 article entitled "The Tragic Hero in Julius Caesar" which appeared in Shakespeare Quarterly, XI (pp.329-333):

    In naming the play after Caesar, Shakespeare may have been suggesting that to understand the tragic denouement properly we must see it through the eyes of Brutus, who, with a mistaken sense of values, killed Caesar because he saw in Caesar something more than was there. Perhaps in naming the play as he did, Shakespeare is pointing up the contrast between Brutus' idealized conception of Caesar as a "hero" and the real Caesar reminding us that it is the discrepancy which is responsible for Brutus' tragic fall...Brutus is misled into mistaking the potential Caesar for the actual Caesar, and the play is nothing more than a slow Sophoclean self-revelation on the part of Brutus that not Caesar but himself has sinned against the gods. With this in mind the play becomes the most powerful expression of that irony which is the keynote of the reversal described.

    You may agree with Paolucci or refute her, but be sure to support your response with evidence from the play.

7. Identify the precise meaning and context of each statement below. The play's poetry is rich in **imagery** and **figurative language** that help to create atmosphere and reveal character and theme. Make sure your comments focus on what is being said of the ill-fated (or dead) ruler as well as offering an analysis of the situation and tone.

    It is no matter. Let no images
    Be hung with Caesar's trophies. I'll about
    And drive the vulgar from the streets
    So do you too, where you perceive them thick.
    These growing feathers plucked from Caesar's wing
    Will make him fly an ordinary pitch,
    Who else would soar above the view of men
    And keep us all in servile fearfulness.

    And therefore think him as a serpent's egg,
    Which, hatched, would as his kind grow mischievous,
    And kill him in the shell.

    Pardon me, Julius! Here wast thou bayed, brave hart;
    Here didst thou fall; and here thy hunters stand,
    Signed in thy spoil, and crimsoned in thy lethe.

8. In the Elizabethan theater in which Shakespeare worked, little scenery was used. He therefore could not depend on setting to establish time, place, and mood. Instead, he had to let the audience know the setting through lines in the play.

   What lines in Act II, Scene 1, make the audience conscious that time is passing? Why is this awareness important?

   Where are time and place revealed in the opening lines of Act III, Scen 1? Why is time important to the reaction of the audience?

9. In a few paragraphs discuss the role of prophecy in foreshadowing the action of the play and the role of fate in determining the lives of Caesar and Brutus. Consider the following:

   *strange disturbances in nature
   *sleeplessness
   *the ghost of Caesar
   *darkness
   *healthiness and infirmities

10. The following are some expressions from Julius Caesar that have passed into our everyday language:

   *an itching palm
   *a dish fit for the gods
   *a lean and hungry look
   *masters of their fate
   *the dogs of war

   Select one of these and write what you think it means. Give details and particulars, and examples, real or imaginary, to support your explanation.

## B. CREATIVE RESPONSE

1. Write a theater review as if you were a critic attending the opening night performance of Julius Caesar.

2. Review Shakespeare's use of his source Plutarch's Lives (see handout entitled "Plutarch and Shakespeare: Two Views of Caesar). Conduct an imaginary interview with the playwright. Have Shakespeare discuss Julius Caesar and tell where he got his ideas, why he omitted some truths, and how he feels about the central conflict and the main characters.

3. Compose a letter to Brutus from Cassius advising him either to join or not to join the conspiracy.

4. Write a journal as if from the perspective of one of the characters in the play, coordinating entries with significant events.

5. Choose a character whose actions were important in determining the outcome of the play. Think about how the chain of events might have been affected if this character had acted differently, and describe what different actions the character might have taken and what the results might have been.

FOR REVIEW:

## Julius Caesar: Characters and Events

### GROUP WORK

DIRECTIONS: Each group is to identify the speaker, audience, situation, and overall importance of each quotation on their list. You may use your books, notes, handouts, and most of all, group discussion. Although everyone should record the findings of the group, you should designate a spokesperson who will present the material to the class.

### List 1

*Act I, scene 2:* "Beware the Ides of March." [Soothsayer to Caesar]

*Act I, scene 2:* "No, Cassius, for the eye sees not itself but by reflection, by some other things." [Brutus to Cassius]

Act I, scene 2: "It doth amaze me a man of such a feeble temper should so get the start of the majestic world and bear the palm alone." [Cassius to Brutus]

*Act I, scene 2:* "Men at some time are masters of their fates." [Cassius to Brutus]

*Act I, scene 2:* "Yond Cassius has a lean and hungry look. He thinks too much; such men are dangerous." [Caesar to Antony]

### List 2

*Act I, scene 3:* "But men may construe things after their fashion, clean from the purpose of the things themselves." [Cicero to Casca]

*Act II, scene 1:* "Which hatched would as his kind grow mischievous, and kill him in the shell." [Brutus to himself]

*Act II, scene 1:* "For Antony is but a limb of Caesar." [Brutus to the conspirators]

*Act II, scene 1:* "We all stand up against the spirit of Caesar." [Brutus to the conspirators]

*Act II, scene 2:* "Cowards die many times before their deaths; the valiant never taste of death but once." [Caesar to Calpurnia]

### List 3

*Act III, scene 1:* "But I am as constant as the northern star." [Caesar to Cassius and Cinna]

*Act III, scene 1:* "I wish we may; but yet have I a mind that fears him much; and my misgiving still falls shrewdly to the purpose." [Cassius to Brutus]

*Act III, scene 2:* "I have the same dagger for myself when it shall please my country to need my death." [Brutus to the crowd]

*Act IV, scene 3:* "To tell thee that thou shalt see me at Philippi." [Caesar's spirit to Brutus]

*Act V, scene 5:* "I know my hour is come." [Brutus to Voluminous]

Source: English Journal, Number 4, April 1993

## EJ FOCUS 2

# Shakespeare: Performance and Text

Shakespeare's works are most often taught as texts to be read rather than as plays to be performed or attended. This month we asked our contributors to respond to questions like these: How do you involve your students as performers and/or audiences of Shakespeare's plays? How do you relate his art to the art of contemporary theater and of popular culture? How do your students respond to his works as theater? How do they reenact and extend the Shakespearean tradition by adapting, imitating, and transforming his works?

We should not have been surprised at the number of manuscripts we received (the most in response to any call for manuscripts in several years), but we were. Neither should we have been surprised at the widespread influence of the Folger Library's education program with its emphasis on the theatricality of Shakespeare's works and on adolescents' natural affinity for improvisation and role-playing. But we were. Many contributors specifically credited the Folger's popular summer institute in teaching Shakespeare for the ideas and techniques they adapted in their classes. But the influence was equally apparent in the work of other teachers who may not even know the work at Folger directly but who have been encouraged by the atmosphere created by the network of teachers trained there.

Hence, we urged Peggy O'Brien, the indefatigable head of education at the Folger, to write an essay introducing this *EJ Focus*. We wish every teacher of literature could attend one of the summer institutes she directs; at least we think everyone who teaches Shakespeare should read her essay and take an oath to abide by its principles. Her emphasis on active learning would surely rescue the Bard from pedantry, enliven the study of his work, and possibly recruit a new generation of enthusiasts.

# Doing Shakespeare:
# "Yo! A Hit! A Very Palpable Hit!"

Peggy O'Brien

The Folger Shakespeare Library is a little marble shoebox of a building tucked right behind the Library of Congress and the United States Capitol in Washington, DC. You'll know it by the bas-reliefs of Shakespearean scenes under the windows on the front of the building. You may be drawn to notice it first, however, by some kind of commotion out on the lawn: a crowd of high-school students hurling Elizabethan insults at each other, a mob of middle schoolers chanting parts of *Macbeth* for voice class, a group of armed junior- and senior-high-school teachers learning stage combat from a fight choreographer who wears a t-shirt that boasts "*Real Men Teach English*," or maybe the local elementary school's fifth-grade class practicing *Hamlet*. "Yo! A hit! A very palpable hit!"

A private research library, the Folger houses the largest and perhaps the most significant collection of materials pertaining to Shakespeare and the English and Continental Renaissance; truly, this collection is the Library's heartbeat. The Folger is the chief repository for Shakespeare scholarship, the gathering place and studying place for scholars from around the world as well as the home of *Shakespeare Quarterly* and the *New Folger Library Shakespeare* editions of the plays.

The Folger Library is also an international center for Shakespeare education. In Washington, DC, we work with local students and teachers—in performance festivals where elementary- and secondary-school students work up Shakespeare scenes and perform them for each other. All across the United States and in England, however, we work with *teachers*. They come to us in the summer to study at our Teaching Shakespeare Institute for a month, or we go to them as a part of our national Shakespeare Education and Festival Project. Forthcoming is the *Teaching Shakespeare* series—the first volume will appear in the fall of 1993—written by Teaching Shakespeare Institute classroom teachers, scholars, and actors. As Head of Education, creating and managing most of these efforts falls to me, a District of Columbia public-school English teacher at work in the world of Shakespeare, a teacher with years of experience in junior- and senior-high-school classrooms full of students of every ability level.

**Shakespeare in the Schools**

The Library's belief about schools is simple. The most significant work in the entire world goes on in schools. Period. This significant work goes on in all kinds of schools—in public and private, in sprawling and tiny and middle-sized, big-city, small-city, rural, and suburban schools everywhere. Not all learning happens in school, obviously, but what goes on daily in the mind of a student is the future creating itself. What goes on in the classroom is more important than anything that has ever or will ever take place in any board room or laboratory or launching pad. The true center of everything in school is what's happening in the mind of a student. And the person who has the most direct influence on that is a teacher. *This* is the world's most important work.

My own specific and practical knowledge of teaching works along with the Library's national scope and perspective to afford me a fairly singular and fascinating bird's-eye view of the teaching and learning of Shakespeare in this country. From where I sit, the realities which are most consistently and perhaps tenaciously part of the landscape of Shakespeare in American schools are these.

*Reality 1*

Shakespeare has been and remains the most commonly taught author in American schools; yet students' exposure to Shakespeare is usually limited in several ways. While many students may study two or three Shakespeare plays in the course of the usual English curriculum sequence, some lower-level students (variously called "basic" students, or "phase three" students, or as I just heard from a West Coast teacher, "low normals") have no chance to study Shakespeare at all. This seems to be because in many places we still buy into, and therefore perpetuate, the myth that Shakespeare is only for the very bright, the very fleet of mind.

*Reality 2*

Even students who study two or three plays have limited exposure to Shakespeare because these two or three are chosen from a *very* short list of . . . oh, say . . . five or six Shakespeare plays. The man wrote thirty-eight, perhaps thirty-nine, plays. Many of these are not only appropriate but splendid for middle-school and junior and senior high-school students. For almost the last one-hundred years, however, the curriculum has been stuck on *Romeo and Juliet, Julius Caesar, Macbeth,* and *Hamlet,* with *Othello, A Midsummer Night's Dream,* and *The Tempest* thrown in occasionally. This narrow vision is due in part to tradition, to the publishers of the large anthologies that many teachers must teach from, and to the fact that *Macbeth* and *Caesar* were thought by someone at some time to be "shorter" and "easier." This reality is so pervasive that many students believe Shakespeare wrote only four plays, and many teachers believe that tragedies are easier to teach than comedies. Tradition is an all-powerful force. Incidental to tradition but important to me is the fact that in the plays on this short list, the presence of female characters is brief, or relatively brief, and most often ends in madness or death.

***Many students believe Shakespeare wrote only four plays, and many teachers believe tragedies are easier to teach than comedies.***

*Reality 3*

The teaching of Shakespeare is surrounded by many, many *shoulds.*

> Students *should* like it.
>
> They *should* be moved by it.
>
> It *should* be taught the *right* way.
>
> Students *should* understand it *all:* plot, character, history, maybe sources, imagery, scansion, *themes,* criticism, and, of course, the meaning of every word.
>
> Shakespeare *should* be read, studied, pored over.

In addition, a kind of limited *should* suggests that every class needs a critical number of models of the Globe Theatre, even though we don't know much about what it actually looked like.

*Reality 4*

When it comes to the teaching and learning of Shakespeare, many people on both sides of the desk are nervous or bored or overwhelmed or all of the above. Many teachers and students feel that the teaching and learning of Shakespeare is painfully difficult, and that help is always indicated.

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This notion sends our students to the video store or to *Cliffs Notes*. The same notion sends us to the publishers who generate canned worksheets and tests, parallel texts, various kinds of teaching materials which dumb Shakespeare down for ourselves and for our students. These kinds of "teaching aids" play off of and into our nervousness.

### The Folger Philosophy

The Library's education programs roll busily along with both this partial panorama *and* a solid educational philosophy in full view. The philosophy is pretty straightforward, has stood the test of time and experience in schools all over the country, and can be subdivided into a few key beliefs.

#### *Belief 1*

Shakespeare is for all students: of all ability levels and reading levels, of every ethnic origin, in every kind of school. In 1623, John Heminge and Henry Condell—two members of Shakespeare's acting company—compiled thirty-six plays and had them published in the *First Folio*. Their introduction to this book is entitled "To the great Variety of Readers," and it begins, "From the most able, to him that can but spell. . ." They meant it in 1623. This is not only possible but essential. We need to remind ourselves that the audience at the Globe Theatre resembled nothing so much as a sixth-period class.

A month or so ago, a teacher from New York state told me with great excitement about the kids in his "automotive-track" English class, an ethnically mixed and uniformly low-level group. He decided that he was tired of teaching them the prescribed curriculum, so he ordered a set of *Hamlet* texts for them, the same edition used by his Advanced Placement students. These "automotive" kids reacted initially with a small degree of fear and a large degree of pride; they began to carry their books so that *Hamlet* was always prominently displayed. The teacher was amazed to discover that, while the reading was hard for them, their comments and questions about the play were far more insightful than those of his advanced students. As their confidence and interest grew, their reading and writing skills seemed to improve as well. "These kids *love* Shakespeare!" the teacher said. "They understand it. They *own* it. I can't believe I've been short-changing kids like this!"

#### *Belief 2*

The teacher's job is that of tour guide and not translator. As teachers, our job is to help students make connections—between themselves and a piece of literature, between a piece of literature and the ideas it embodies, between the world of the piece and the student's world, connections *within* a piece of literature. Sometimes, in the business of teaching Shakespeare, we teachers *become* the connection. We translate. Our students are struggling over the first scene in *Romeo and Juliet* or "If it were done when 'tis done . . ." and we jump in enthusiastically to say, "See . . . what he's really saying is . . ." and we explain everything. In our great urgency to be helpful, we translate. This doesn't serve our students particularly well since what we have learned is that the translation of *Romeo and Juliet* done by a teacher in . . . say . . . the ninth grade doesn't particularly help a student deal with the language of *Julius Caesar* the next year.

We need to stop talking and arrange the connections between our students and Shakespeare so that they can make their own discoveries. We need to give students the room to discover the natural affinity which they have for Shakespeare. All kinds of students *do* have this natural affinity. But sometimes we as teachers are so busy managing and explaining and filling the empty spaces that we don't give our students time to discover it for themselves.

#### *Belief 3*

*Learn* Shakespeare *by doing* Shakespeare. Any good teacher knows that the best way to learn *anything* is to learn it actively. Active learning is still a rarity in American classrooms. We know better, but we are afraid. Perhaps this is because we fall prey to the prevailing prejudices about active learning. There is the common "truth" that true intellectual learning involves only one's brain, and that using the intellect *and* other body parts simultaneously is impossible. That's why, when the assistant principal came to observe my colleague Ginny and found her students working in groups preparing scenes for performance, he said to her, "Listen, I'll come back another day when you're really teaching something." That's why most college professors conduct classes where students are fixed in their seats. This prejudice stands even though actively learning literature involves the very best kind of

close reading, the most rigorous sort of literary analysis.

*Belief 4*

All kinds of students do best when they make their own seminal connection with Shakespeare—that is to say *his words in their mouths*—before they take on any other connections or the connections of any others. By this connection, I mean *immediate* work with text. I am talking about a little scene—the first mechanicals scene from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, for example, or the killing of Cinna the poet from *Caesar*—worked up collaboratively with a group of students. They act and direct and get it on its feet, and the learning takes place in this process.

With a teacher as tour guide, students learn Shakespeare by meeting him on his own ground—inside the play. Is this about *acting?* No, it's about *doing*. They own that little scene, and therefore the play, and therefore the playwright, and therefore the canon. Students learn, not by being told what scholars say or how their teacher would block a scene—other people's *shoulds*—but by figuring it out for themselves.

**The Philosophy in Action**

All of the Library's education programs resonate with these beliefs, and the echoes come back to us from all over the country. Learning this way seems to have a big impact on students, on all kinds of students. A teacher from Detroit wrote that

> students who perform in scenes from Shakespeare learn about 500% more about the play and, by extension, about other Shakespearean plays than those who only read and discuss the plays.

Students are learning this way in every kind of school, at every ability level. A prep school in Honolulu focuses on one play each year, and the entire school takes part in directing and acting scenes from the play.

A teacher from Plain Dealing, Louisiana, writes,

> At the end of the year I gave the kids an anonymous "test" of about 20 questions, and on it I asked "What was the easiest thing we did all year?" and "What was the most fun thing we did all year?" The majority—nearly all, in fact, of my non-readers—wrote *Macbeth* for both, though they didn't always spell it like that. Almost three days after they'd performed *Macbeth* on videotape, reading flawlessly and often memorizing lines, I had them reading a CBS script in class, and I was shocked. I thought, "My God, I've forgotten that they can't read!" But they stumbled happily along.

"At first I hated Shakespeare because the language was so hard to understand," said an African American student from Washington, DC. "But having acted it out, I can see how much feeling he put into his work. Now I not only know what the language means, I think it's fun!" There is no substitute for the process in which every student deserves to participate: making their own connections with Shakespeare by discovering Shakespeare as a play played. A teacher from suburban Chicago wrote,

> My sophomores' scenes from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* were fantastic. All of this acting created a wonderful atmosphere of creativity and participation. As for me, I was just one of the other participants. They became leaders in giving their theories, finding themes and motifs, honing in on characters. They were bolder in making statements about literature and challenging me and the critics.

As a teacher I have long understood the value of this kind of learning, but it was all brought home to me in a very immediate way a couple of years ago in my own family. My son, then sixteen and a junior in high school, wanted to get together with a few neighborhood kids and work up a scene for the

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Library's local Shakespeare Festival. He is a regular kid—we don't speak in rhymed couplets in my house or read *Coriolanus* over dinner or anything—and it seemed like a good thing to want to do. So I told him that I would bring home the registration forms for him, and I also told him that they would obviously need a grown-up to help them. "We don't need a grown-up. We'll do it ourselves," he said. They ended up taking one bit of adult advice about possible scenes they might work on. They chose *Dogg's Hamlet,* playwright Tom Stoppard's fifteen-minute cutting of *Hamlet.* So off they went—five sixteen-year-old boys and a wildly dramatic seventeen-year-old girl, students at three different Washington, DC, city schools, down the runway toward Shakespeare.

Since all of the rehearsals happened in my dining room, I had the distinct pleasure and pain of being able to hear *everything:* endless arguments about various line readings, constant disagreement about who should enter when and from where, varying opinions concerning what "the divinity that shapes our ends" (and dozens of other lines) *really* means. It tried my patience for a good long time, until it finally dawned on me that this was *the process.* The more they worked it out, the more invested and enthusiastic they became. Shakespeare was happening, and more than Shakespeare was happening.

Jordan—the incredibly smart and verbal and energetic kid who perhaps didn't learn in quite the way his school wanted him to and whose grades perhaps never quite reflected how bright he really is—became the center of it all. He badgered people about rehearsals, he kept track of decisions about stage business and lists of props, he knew his lines before anyone else. He had become the leader. When the day dawned, they went full of nerves to the Library's Elizabethan Theatre, watched seven other schools do their thing, and did theirs. They were hilarious. They got lots of laughs. They had an incredibly good time.

I arrived home that evening to a house full of parents, brothers, and sisters watching a very bad home video of this now famous *Dogg's Hamlet* performance, and I sat down next to Jordan. He played Shakespeare (in jeans and ruff), and then Claudius. Early in the tape, at the point at which he got his first uproarious laugh, he turned to me with complete disbelief and said, "That's me."

"That's you," I said. "And you were *great.*"

"It's me, and I actually did that, and it was *good.*"

After this experience, Jordan really caught fire about this playwright: he was accepted into a special Shakespeare class at the Folger and the Shakespeare elective at his high school. He took both of these courses during the same semester, a true learning experience. In the Folger course—with sixteen high-school students and class taught every week by a different Shakespeare scholar or actor—students learn very quickly that the long and winding road of scholarship and theatrical productions provides us with the richness of differing insights and opinions. They learn that there is no single way to interpret these plays. On the other hand, the elective at his own high school was taught by the department chair who had taught Shakespeare for many years and who knew indisputably the correct and sole interpretations of many Shakespeare plays. That semester Jordan learned a great deal about Shakespeare and common sense and diplomacy. He survived that experience, still feeling that he owns the playwright. Now in college, he doesn't want to be an actor or even a literature student—at the moment he is talking about a double major in law and philosophy—but he will always have great energy for the playwright.

The other story in the saga of *Dogg's Hamlet* is the one that belongs to my own son. Because of my work, and because my husband is an actor and a director, my son has grown up watching Shakespeare plays on stage in that familiar kind of way in which children know and accept the family business. He has seen many, many plays—in London, in Stratford-upon-Avon, in New York and Washington, and in less flashy venues—and he has had splendid opportunities to visit with actors and directors and to listen to them discuss their work. Quite simply, none of this experience—not one bit of it—has had an effect on John anything close to the power produced by his excursion into this *Hamlet.* Not remotely. *He* owns the playwright now and forever. Since his fifteen minutes of fame, his playgoing is more energetic and informed, but even informed playgoing is no match for *creating* Shakespeare.

Learning in this way is good for all students: in my family and yours, in my classes and yours, in Los Angeles and Minneapolis, in Georgia, Iowa and Umatilla, Florida, in American Fork, Utah, and Hawkinsville, Georgia, at the Groton School and at Simeon Vocational High School in Chicago. Learning in this way gets students generating questions and positing their own answers, not just absorbing other people's questions and answers. In *Literary Understanding and Literature Instruction*, Judith Langer, a co-director of the Center for the Learning and Teaching of Literature says,

> Conventional wisdom about effective approaches to teaching the English language arts is schizophrenic—discussions about writing instruction emphasize process-oriented approaches that focus on students' thinking, while the teaching of literature remains dominated by text-based approaches that focus on "right" answers and predetermined interpretations. (1991, Report Series 2.11, Albany: Center for the Learning and Teaching of Literature, 2)

The process of generating their own questions and posing answers puts students on a playing field with scholars, actors, and directors. As teachers we learn that our students are up to it. We also learn that *we* are up to it. Collaboration is a much more exciting and energizing way to teach than suffering under the burden of having to be the font of all knowledge. Besides, the font of all Shakespeare knowledge is well beyond one person's grasp, even the most erudite of scholars.

***The process of generating their own questions and posing answers puts students on a playing field with scholars, actors, and directors.***

I was reminded in another way recently of the power of this kind of active learning. About ten o'clock one evening, I was at my neighborhood gas station putting gas in my car. Since Washington, DC, has seen an increase in crime during the last couple of years, I have become a bit more watchful and suspicious than I'd like to be. As I pumped gas into my car, I saw a big, tall man come out of the shadows a little. He said, "*Hey!*"

I thought, "Oh no, I don't want this . . . " and tried to remember which pocket my money was in as I said, "Yes?"

He walked closer. "Aren't you the Shakespeare lady?" he said.

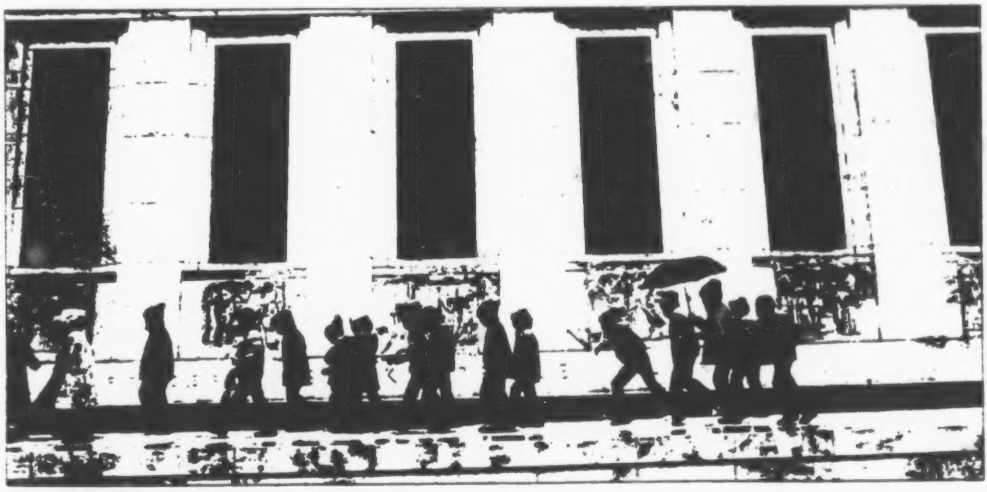
"Yes!" I said, much relieved.

He walked even closer, and opened his jacket to show me his Shakespeare t-shirt underneath. "Don't you remember me?" he crowed. "I was Petruchio! I was *awesome!*" I *did* remember him. He went to a local DC public high school, and he was an outstanding Petruchio. He was awesome. He *is* awesome.

In its making, real and active familiarity with Shakespeare or any piece of classical literature—and the language and ideas, plots, and characters that they give us—creates an intellectual experience that our students are worthy of and a power of investment that all students deserve. The results are big and important.

"I was Petruchio!" he said. He was and is.

*Folger Shakespeare Library*
*Washington, DC 20003*



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# Taking Shakespeare from the Page to the Stage

Kathleen T. Breen

My own high-school and college experience of studying Shakespeare centered on reading the texts and discovering and analyzing the metaphors, so it is small wonder that my early teaching followed that same pattern. For example, a dozen years ago I dragged a class of high-school seniors through a study of weed imagery in *Hamlet;* a few years later, I bored a class of juniors by making them follow in their texts as I played a tedious recording of *The Tempest.* My apologies to all those students.

In the summers of 1988 and 1989, I participated in the Folger Library's summer institute, Teaching Shakespeare's Language, an experience that changed my entire approach to teaching. As a result, for the last four years my students have taken Shakespeare from the page to the stage by becoming directors and actors as well as scholars. As intimidated as students often are at first by the complexity of Shakespeare's language, they soon discover they can interpret and make meaning once they are on their feet. The secret is in experiencing the text as the script of a play rather than in reading it as one would a novel. I tell my students that studying Shakespeare without acting or seeing it performed would be like taking a music appreciation course and trying to experience Beethoven by reading the sheet music.

Most English classes are not filled with budding drama students, so how does this work with average kids who declare they do not want to act anything out? How does it work with at-risk students who read poorly?

To begin a play, I get the whole class on their feet and hand out copies of a choral arrangement of a speech: for example, Act IV, scene i of *Macbeth* (the witches' incantations) or Hamlet's "To be or not to be" soliloquy. Within twenty minutes' time, the students are all speaking Shakespeare's words and enjoying it, protected and supported by the anonymity of the crowd. Suddenly, reading is not an issue; past experience with Shakespeare is not an issue. I have found that working with several choral arrangements, even if they do not come from the play we are about to study, gives students an immediate and active experience of Shakespeare. Some scenes, such as the witches' spell, lend themselves to choral rendition with accompanying background sounds and free movement in the room. Without realizing it, the students begin acting.

At this point, depending on the play, I may go directly to the first scene. For example, in teaching *The Tempest,* I again get the whole class on their feet and give out copies of Act I, scene i (the shipwreck). Then we do a read-through with frequent pauses to figure out what things might mean; for example, What is a "bawling, blasphemous, uncharitable dog"? Who are the mariners? What kind of people are they? Who else is on board this ship? How do these two groups of people feel toward each other? Working together, the students have no problem answering these questions; Shakespeare plants all the answers in the dialogue. Within an hour, the class is performing a full scene. On the last run-through we add thunder, lightning, and wind. (The extra mariners rattle desks, flick the light switches, and blow noisily.) This always works.

With *Romeo and Juliet,* I begin with the street fight at the outset, but with a variation. I divide the class into Montagues and Capulets, then arm them with insults taken from elsewhere in Shakespeare: for example, "Vile worm!"; "Why you bald-pated lying rascal!"; "Go thou, and fill another room in hell!"; and "Let vultures gripe thy guts!". As a prelude to the opening scene, the two families hurl insults at one another across the room, then disperse. It also works at this point to let several students improvise an encounter in the street between servants of the rival families before handing out copies of the text. Usually students have anticipated the kind of conflict that takes place in the play. Consequently, when they discover what Shakespeare wrote, they already feel some ownership.

***I emphasize the idea that the play is a script and that each director and actor will have decisions to make.***

Once the students have this kind of positive experience, it is an easy transition to the play as a whole. I emphasize the idea that the play is a script and that each director and actor will have decisions to make. We discuss the fact that there is no one right way to do a play or a scene or even a line. I let the students know that I don't have all the answers about what this play means; in fact, no one does.

It's important, then, to convey the "story" of the play as quickly as possible, for the goal of our study is not to discover the plot. (This reminds me of the torturous quizzes I once gave to "catch" students at not understanding the scene I had assigned for reading homework. *Mea culpa.*) One way is simply to tell the story; another is to narrate it with key lines interspersed. With this method, each pair of students is given a line to speak on cue as the story is narrated. Adding movement or a gesture to the line brings the story to life. (Credit for this idea belongs to Peggy O'Brien of the Folger Shakespeare Library.)

Having decorated the room with bright Renaissance banners, I ask the students to form acting companies, named for actual Elizabethan and Jacobean companies: The King's Men, The Lord Chamberlain's Men, The Earl of Pembroke's Company, and the like. The students enjoy choosing a name, selecting accompanying symbols (simple line drawings of Renaissance figures: the Globe, a tower, a lute, a dancer, and the like), and making playbills.

Each company selects a scene to produce, direct, and perform. The basic requirement is that everyone must participate. Collectively they must direct the scene and every person must have a speaking part on stage. To record their decisions, the company produces a prompt book in which they note blocking, vocal directions, and gestures. Working together, they decide on a concept for the scene, specifying the effect they want to produce. They include descriptions and/or sketches of costumes as well as notes on a set design. Each student adds notes on his or her character, addressing these questions: What do I want in this scene? What do I do to try to get it?

Of course, the prompt book is a major project that evolves as the students work on the scene. In the absence of stage directions, they have to figure out who is speaking to whom and how the characters on stage must be reacting. Like real directors and actors, they learn what works and what doesn't work by trying things out. They learn to cooperate and to take chances. They lose their fear of being wrong and begin to trust in their own creativity.

In my classroom, this approach leads students to solve problems with ingenuity and insight. One group, having more actors than parts, cast three students as Caliban, wrapping all three in a stretchy fabric and using all three voices to convey his "monstrous" nature. Likewise, students have elected to double-cast Macbeth to represent his dilemma about killing Duncan. Standing side by side, the two Macbeths alternated in the soliloquy, "If it were done . . ." In another scene, students chose to have the witches invisible on stage, echoing Macbeth's words as he plotted the murder of Banquo.

Giving students this kind of freedom also enables them to play with Shakespeare. One company doing a segment from *The Tempest* set the scene in outer space to signify the new world and added New Age music and strobe lights. Another group, staging the meeting of Miranda and Ferdinand, satirized their "love at first sight" by transforming Ferdinand into a lounge lizard complete with gold chains, leisure suit, and a lisp. In a parody of that same scene, Miranda was cast as a hopeless Valley girl who, like, had never seen, like, a guy before, while Ferdinand was a tiresome yuppie in a business suit, very much impressed with his own status. In still another scene, the goddesses Iris, Ceres, and Juno entered as rappers to bless the newlyweds. My students discovered on their own that the rhythm of Shakespeare's lines adapted perfectly to rap. These transformations confirm that students are thinking about the characters and the ideas in the plays and relating them to contemporary life.

In addition to using performance as a means of understanding the play, it is also valuable to let students perform for one another. A school-wide Shakespeare Festival allows students to perform and appreciate one another's talent. A festival can incorporate music, dance, food, popular culture, and entertainment and can involve students from arts, social-studies, home-economics, science, and even math classes. Or festivals can be staged on a larger scale. In my community, the Kentucky Shakespeare Festival, which produces free Shakespeare in the summer, has inaugurated an annual student scene festival to celebrate Shakespeare's birthday. Last year over 350 students participated, performing scenes for one another throughout the day.

Using performance techniques doesn't have to result in formal production, however. Sometimes students learn as much by exploring only a portion of a play. It would be interesting to teach *Julius Caesar* by using only selected scenes, beginning perhaps with the mob accosting Cinna the poet. Students might readily see a connection to the Los Angeles riots and so become more interested in the scenes where mob rule enters in.

Students may also focus on a particular portion of a play by working in groups to make their own choral arrangements of key speeches. Here they make decisions about which lines to cut, which lines to emphasize, and how to bring out the main idea of the speech. I am always surprised by the creativity that emerges in this activity. This can be done with a play they have studied, or it can be done "cold." For example, even students who have not read *The Tempest* can create a meaningful arrangement of Prospero's renunciation speech, "Ye elves of hills, brooks, standing lakes, and groves. . . ." (Hint: This is where I get some of the choral arrangements I use with the next group that comes along.)

It does help to supplement the text with other materials, but the more freedom I give my students to play with Shakespeare's text, the less I see the need to add companion readings. I do use videotapes of various productions, usually to compare particular scenes. For example, I show four different versions of Lady Macbeth's "Come you spirits" soliloquy and ask students to discuss the effects of each.

Once interested in a play, my students have readily made connections between Shakespeare and contemporary life. In *Macbeth*, for example, they see a man driven by ambition and greed and a powerful contrast between good and evil. Asked to name films that relate, they list titles like *The Godfather* and *Wall Street*. For possible use in the classroom, the contemporary film, *Men of Respect* (1991, Dir. William Reilly, RCA), offers a retelling of the Macbeth story in a gangster setting, which prompts discussion of such topics as ambition, greed, murder, and intrigue.

***The contemporary film,***
**Men of Respect *(1991), offers***
***a retelling of the* Macbeth**
***story in a gangster setting.***

Even television reruns have their place in studying Shakespeare. Consider the formula plot of every *Love Boat* episode: a number of single people seek refuge from their troubles on a cruise ship where they fall in love at first sight, then return home in happy pairs planning to be married. I asked my students, "What if Shakespeare had written *As You Like It* as an episode of *The Love Boat*?" In response, they gave me several interesting adaptations with Duke Senior sitting in for Captain Steubing and Celia and Rosalind discussing fortune and nature at the roulette tables.

Over the past four years, I have continued to develop, adapt, and sometimes pirate new ideas for use in the classroom. The advantage to students is that they will not be left with the one memory I have of studying *Hamlet:* the sound of Richard Burton's recorded voice droning an answer to Polonius' question, "What are you reading, my Lord Hamlet?"

"Words. Words. Words."

*Shawnee High School*
*Louisville, Kentucky 40212*

Constance Borab
Masterworks: Curriculum for **HAMLET**
April 13, 1993

This lesson is for Seniors of "average ability." This class is composed of 22 inner city, 18 year old females. English is a second language for nearly 60 % of the predominantly Haitian, Afro American class.

The students are asked to know and grow, not only through an intellectual experience, but also through emotional, physical and spiritual ones. I believe that the more a student involves her body in the learning process, the more she is able to comprehend the body of knowledge. I ask for development of critical abilities more than ability to memorize. And though Brecht would take the antithetical point of view, I believe the more that the students can identify with or relate to the issues and/or characters raised in the literature the more she will grow. I believe the more the students is moved by the process of exploration in class, the better a student and open a person she becomes.
As we begin Hamlet, I look to the following **to be present throughout the unit**:

1. To create an environment of trust for the personal, theatrical and scholarly exploration.
2. To emphasize the stage ( particularly, the actor's and director's work), as well as the page.
3. To invite each student to see several possible interpretations.
4. To ask the students to present and defend several interpretative points. (It is Rule #3 that each student's voice must be heard at least once during each class.)

**Lesson one: "Who me? Understand Shakespeare?"**

In addition to beginning the process of realizing the above mentioned goals, this lesson will look to the following:

1. The students will identify the contemporary themes and conflicts in Hamlet.
2. The students, working cooperatively,will create a theatrical moment.
3. The students will begin to break down the language barrier.
4. The students will draw a parallel between these presentations and the Elizabethan theater.

The lesson begins with asking the students to have journals ready. (They are used to the method and madness in my approach by the time in the course.) They are given the following instructions for creating a body sculpture for an assigned lined:

1. Each person will receive an index card with a line on it.
    a. "O, vengeance!"
    b. "I will obey, my lord."
    c. "Alas, he's mad."
    d. "To die, to sleep-To sleep -perchance to dream:
    e. "O most pernicious woman!"
2. Free write for two minutes in response to the line.
3. Find your group members, i.e. those that have the same line.
4. Share your ideas about the line. Each person must contribute. Total time is three minutes.

5. Create one body sculpture per group that the group agrees pictures an agreed upon interpretation. The picture may move, but must end in a freeze frame. The only line spoken is the given line. Every group must be involved in the picture. (5 minutes)
6. The groups present their pictures one at a time. After each group presents theirs, the "audience" answers the question, "What do you see?" This allows for all levels of observation and interpretation.
7. Since the room and presentations are set up as thrust stage, with some of the audience sitting in the pit area and some in the perimeter desks, it lends to my pointing out the similarities to the Globe set up. Also, I ask the students to point out other similarities to Elizabethan performance.
8. The students are asked to "brainstorm" the quotation worksheet for homework. The worksheet list each of the quotations with directions for brainstorming ideas , images, etc. on each.
9. If time permits, I integrate their body sculpture insights with my "Hamlet is a story that still speaks to us today" introduction.

How well the goals of this lesson are realized is evaluated in the sculptures, the follow up discussions in the response to my observations and in the openness of the class in first five minutes of the next lesson with review and with homework sharing that will occur in later lessons.

**Lesson two: "The Hook"**

The objective of this lesson: The students' will use their imagination as we begin to explore the opening scenes as a staging problem and as exposition.

1. I would ask, prior to class, one of more dramatic students to play the host and give them some direction as to when to make entrances and exits. (She would not be in the room when the class begins.) I would also ask three other students to create sound effects,e.g. moans, wind arising, etc.
2. Students enter into a dark classroom. The parts are assigned and flashlights given to readers.
3. Readers are given basic direction and brief ( in a few choice words) character concepts.
4. We read the scene through to line 68, with the Ghost and sound effects adding to theatricality of this presentation.
5. Lights up. The students then must point out the stage directions, the cues for action, the character direction and summarize the background and plot.
6. Together we look at the background given in Horatio's lines through line 125.
7. Lights out again. The readers stand up the rest of the scene.
8. Lights up and after summarizing the details revealed in the last part of scene, the students' freewrite for three minutes as to what their reaction would be if they saw a ghost that looked like their best friend's father walking through all the cars on the Orange Line train you were riding at midnight.

9. The students, after sharing their writings, would compare their attitude toward a ghost to the Elizabethan attitude toward the Ghost.
10. Homework: Read I, ii, 1-128. Decide how the opening procession/ entrance of the king and queen would be done. Write down ideas and be prepare to direct it.

Level and enthusiasm of participation serves as the best evaluative tool.

**Lesson three: "Get to know Me"**
Objective: Students will define character and relationship concepts as revealed in I, ii.

1. After checking homework, I would ask for a student director volunteer to set up the opening procession.
2. Student actor volunteers would play out the director's blocking while the rest of the class is audience. (I usually volunteer to play Claudius in one of the presentations and ask specific questions regarding the manner of procession, the degree of public affection between the newlyweds, etc.)
3. We would freeze frame the following moments and ask what the picture reveals about the relationships and characters:
   - A. Claudius and Gertrude's first moment visible to court.
   - B. One moment in their procession that reveals Claudius and Gertrude's manner of relating.
   - C. Hamlet's entrance?
   - D. The final moment before Claudius speaks.
4. Repeat the above at least twice with different directors who have different concepts.
5. By examining the height, position, proximity of characters, the students will begin the exploration of the character relationships.
6. Read Claudius speech. Students will be asked to evaluate Claudius' "double talk" his ability to charm the court and handle state business.
7. Read through line 130. The students are asked to evaluate Claudius' political persona and his actions (and delay of action) in addressing Hamlet.
8. Students are asked to describe Hamlet and Gertrude's relationship in three adjectives and support their interpretation from the text.
9. Homework: Journal writing: What "older brother advice" would your older brother give you about your first serious relationship with a guy? What is your response? (I give options for those who don't actual have an older brother.)

Level and enthusiasm of participation serves as the best evaluative tool.

**Lesson Four: "Master Thespian"**
**Objective**: The students will gain insight into the emotional state of Hamlet and textual clues for an actor.

1. Introduce the term soliloquy and set up the Hamlet's I, ii.
2. Presentation of Hamlet's soliloquy. (I ask the student's to close their books and watch my performance of I, ii 128-158.)

3. Without referring to the text yet, I ask the student to tell me what they observed about Hamlet's message and emotions and the effect of the performance on them as audience.
4. Looking at the text, the students are asked to note the clues to the actor of the emotionally charged lines. I ask them to remember that breaks in the iambic pentameter, repetition of a word or phrase, and the punctuation all shape meaning and therefore performance and interpretation.
5. In doing the above, the students note Hamlet's hang ups on his mother, the time interval between being widowed and marriage, the father's brother, and "incestuous sheets."
6. In covering the rest of the scene, the students are asked to define the nature of the relationship between Horatio and Hamlet, to note the expository details and to note the stage directional clues in Horatio's description of the Ghost's I, i appearance.
7. Homework: Hand out "Hamlet Projects" sheet. (See Lesson 5.) The class will go over #1 and are asked to choose one form and produce a summary accordingly for Act I,ii. Read I, iii.

Level and enthusiasm of participation serves as the best evaluative tool.

**Lesson five: "Passion and the Projects"**
Objective: Generate enthusiasm for projects as the are explained to students. (These projects, especially #2 and 5 become integral to the curriculum.)

## Hamlet Projects

**You will do two of the following:**

**(You must do 1a or 1b or 1c or 1d or 1e and one of the others.)**

1. **Do one of the following.** The assignment for each act is due the day we complete the act in class.

A. Write a gossip column for the DANISH STAR about each act. Be sure to include all juicy tidbits from each scene.

B. Write a telegram (no more than three per scene) capturing the essential message of each scene. Remember to be brief.

C. Write a poem summarizing each act.
D. Write a song that summarizes each act. (This is to be performed in class.)
E. Write a journal entry per scene from Hamlet's point of view.

**Choose one from #2-6. Work for #2 and #5, are presented in class the day after the scene is covered. All other projects are due, at the latest, the day after we finished the play. As always, your creative consultant (moi) is available upon appointment in the AM from 7:15 to 7:40 or on Monday afternoons or we can "do lunch" and you can pitch your ideas.**

2. Pick six important lines **from one of the following scenes** and create a stage picture for each. Explain, briefly the relationships and intentions in each moment: Act I, ii; Act III,i; Act III, ii, Act III iv, Act V,ii. (Clear the six lines with me.)

3. If Hamlet were set in America in the 1990s, **do or answer one of the following**.
A. Draw the costumes for each of the major characters. (6) Give concept.
B. Describe the setting and family history.
C. Pick two major characters and do three costumes (Act 1, 3, 5) for them. Explain.

4. **Do one of the following** for the play produced in Elizabethan costumes.
A. Draw the costumes for each of the major characters. (6) Give concept.
B. Pick two major characters and do three costumes (Act 1, 3, 5) for them. Explain.

5. **Performance. Do one of the following:**
A. Participate in 3 role plays.
B. Act out a scene or one of the soliloquys in class. (Take a look at Act III,i and Ophelia's Act IV scenes.) You must meet twice for rehearsal with the incredible director, Ms. Borab.
C. Storytell three times from one of the following characters' point of view: Ophelia, Laertes, Claudius or Gertrude point of view. You may storytell as Hamlet as long as you do not just rehash the the soliloquys.

6. If you were a character in the play who would you be? Whose personality and reactions would be closest to yours? **Write a daily journal for that character.**

**************************

1. Students read aloud their last night's homework. At least one example of each form of summary is read. Comments, affirmations and clarifications are made when appropriate. If necessary, exemplary projects from my files are presented.
2. As the projects #2-6 are explained, students are encouraged to ask creative as well practical questions. I often invite students to consider seriously particular projects, especially #2 and #5.
3. A role play assignments are given to two groups of three students (hopefully volunteer) in preparation for I, iii. I try to pick two groups that will create very different role plays, one of strict family. The role play involves a 1990s version of brother and sister conversation (the groundwork is laid out in journal) and adds the father's input and rules.
4. Homework: In journals list 10 rules that your family rule maker (e.g. your father) makes for you. Are there any differences in rules for your brothers? (If there are no brothers in family, then imagine yourself making rules for your sons. Would they be different from your rules for your daughter?)

The responses immediately given during and after the presentation of the projects is a good indication of the how successful the projects will be. Of course, the projects themselves are a long range evaluative tool.

**Lesson six: " Family dynamics: Elizabethan Style"**
Objective: The students are asked to compare the family dynamics of Ophelia's family, Hamlet's family and their own families. The students are asked to theorize how much of the dynamic is cultural, circumstantial and personality based.

1. Journal sharings about family rules will include comments, elicited from students, about how much of the dynamic is cultural, circumstantial and personality based.
2. Role plays presentations.
3. Students are asked to write in journals ten observations, insights and/or points of identification that the presentations elicited.
4. Brief sharing of reactions given in class.
5. Read the scene in class in three sections. Discuss each part in terms of the relationships between the two family members and note key quotations. This is the time I would follow through on the first day body sculpture of "I will obey, my lord."
6. Students asked to draw parallels between presentations and this scene and Hamlet's family. The students are also ask to comments on how much of the dynamic is cultural, circumstantial and personality based.
7. Homework: Students are given the following worksheet asked to complete it. Also they are to read I, iv. (The words are the last word in line in Ghost's monologue, 41- 83.)

## Murder Mystery Worksheet

You are to play detective and the only clues you have to this murder mystery are the following sets of clues. Write down your theory as to the method, the murderer and the motive.

1 beast gifts- power lust queen. there, dignity vow decline poor mine.
2 moved, heaven, linked, bed garbage.
3. air ; orchard, afternoon, stole vial, pour effect man through body, posset milk, mine , about crust body.
4. brother's hand, dispatched, sin, unaneled, account head.
5. horrible! not be incest.

Level and enthusiasm of participation serves as the best evaluative tool.

**Lesson six: "A Ghost of a tale"**
**Objectives: The students will:**

- finish act one and bring out the details of exposition.
- think creatively about staging and note the implied stage directions
- develop relationship concept between Hamlet and Ghost/King
- note Hamlet's interpretation of his mission.

1. The students are divided into groups of four and half of the groups are asked to do a **sound and movement** exercise for I, iv. The other groups do a sound and movement for I, v, 90ff. Sound and movement is basically a dumb show ( the students are allowed to use sound but no words) in which the students play out characters the action of the scene as they see it. This takes in total 15 minutes.
2. After the students present their I, iv sound and movement, we draw out the lines that indicate the action.
3. We draw out the lines of reaction, e.g. Horatio's fear that ghost will draw Hamlet into madness or Hamlet's "My Fate cries out." and "Something's rotten..."
4. Go over three students' murder mystery scenarios.
5. Compare their scenarios to I,v and as always highlight the key lines.

6. Read Hamlet's soliloquy 90-112. Evaluate his ability to follow his father's directives, note his reaction and recall the body sculpting of "O most pernicious woman."
7. Other student groups present sound and movement for the end of Act I. Note Hamlet's reactions and who hears the Ghost in each presentation.
8. Bring out the details in the corresponding lines.
9. Homework: Answer in journal the following questions:
    - A. What is in Hamlet's mind that he decides to put on an "antic disposition"?
    - B. Give five suggestions to Hamlet as to how he can convince others that he is mad.
    - C. List at least ten things that would lead Hamlet to say "The time is out of joint. O cursed spite that ever I was born to set it right."

Read Act ii, i.

The review of last night's homework, the sound and movements exercises, and level and enthusiasm of participation serve as the best evaluative tools.

**Lesson Seven: The lunatic and the lover**

Objective: The students will discuss motivation of the closet scene and begin to theorize about Hamlet's motivations for acting mad.

1. Collect Act I summary projects. Go over homework 9 A&B from last night and generate ideas about Hamlet's mindset and act.
2. The students, after sharing ideas about homework C, will explore the potential for true madness in Hamlet.
3. The student will summarize II,i,1-74. They will theorize as to Polonius' motivation and give insight into the father/son relationship.
4. We will read the description of the closet scene and have to students act out what is specifically describe in 75 ff.
5. The students will answer the following:
    - A. Do we believe Ophelia as an eyewitness?
    - B. What were Hamlet's motivations for his actions?
    - C. Is it all an act? How frustrated is Hamlet with Ophelia's obedience to her father? How do you interpret the fact that he was hiding in her sewing closet?
    - D. How close were Ophelia and Hamlet prior to this? Describe the details as to length, nature, etc. of their "courtship."
    - E. Why is Ophelia such a frightened girl?
6. How does Polonius' reaction inform us of his relationship with Ophelia and with the King?
7. Introduction (mini lecture) on sources and types of humor, e.g. visual humor, low comedy, irony, sarcasm, comic relief,etc.
8. We begin our work into II, ii together by reading 1-150, then drawing out character sketches, dynamics and plot through questions and answer.
8. Homework: Read II, ii. Each student is given a sheet with a character's name on it, line numbers (the scene is divided into thirds)and they are to be prepare to storytell for that character. With R&G they are asked to storytell their background and tell anecdotes about their childhood "friendship" with Hamlet.

Level and enthusiasm of participation serves as the best evaluative tool.

**(Storytelling is the one device that always seems to deliver the "goods." When I first used this exercise some years ago, I thought it was a rather convenient and semi entertaining way to check whether the students had done their reading. The assignment at the time was the first four chapters of A Separate Peace. My expectation was to simply draw out the facts and the realization of it led the students into an interpretive debate of profound insight. *I highly recommend this device as a regular feature in your classes.*)**

Storytelling: The device

The idea: The students, after reading a story, scene, section of a novel, etc., are recount "what happened."

The hoakiness factor: In the beginning of the year I introduce storytelling, by presenting a "scarf that has magic in it." As I begin the first story of the year I wear the scarf and as I tell the story I model using it as a prop. The storyteller taking up a prop such as the scarf signals for my students that this is very different from a question and answer discussion.

The rule of storytelling are as follows:

1. Everyone must be heard from once in the first round of storytelling before we can enter the second round.
2. Students as they get up and take the "Magic Scarf" must identify who they are as storyteller. They can be a character in the story, an imagined witness, a hearsay gossiper, etc.
3. They tell apart of their character's story as the character, usually no more than a paragraph in the first round. Then they pass the scarf on within ten seconds.
4. They do not have to tell the story sequentially and I encourage them to tell us about the details of the experience both imagined and textual. I especially encourage to be interpretive, emotional, and dramatic.
5. If a student's version contradicts the text, then another storyteller may clarify by using such transition phrases as "That's not the way I saw it...." If this does happen within the storytelling, then I will either take up the scarf to clarify or note it in discuss afterward.

**Lesson eight: "Let the Games Begin"**

Objectives: The students will draw out the characters, purpose, meaning and humor of this scene.

1. Hand back Act 1 projects. Have students read a sampling of them.
2. Through storytelling, the students will draw out the content, give insight to the character's motivations and reactions, play the humor. In general, bring the characters to life. This will be covered in thirds. The students will ask questions and take notes after each section.
3. We draw out important quotations as well as play out some of the humor of this scene.
4. I perform the end Act two soliloquy. Students share observations and critical insights. The body sculpt[illegible] lines from lesson one are highlighted and discussed.
5. Homework: Com[illegible] Hamlet's reactions and resolutions at Act Two to the end of Act One. Bring in an o[illegible]t that represents romantic love in your life, preferably something given to you by a former or present love interest.

Level and enthusiasm of participation serves as the best evaluative tool.

**Lesson nine: "It hath made me mad"**

Objective: The students will:

- experience the theatrical power of Act III,i,
- become familiar with Hamlet's most famous soliloquy.
- compare their interpretations of "to die..." from lesson one to Hamlet's meaning,
- explore possibility of the Ophelia scene as the spine of the play,
- develop definitions of madness,
- identify moments and reasons of madness for Hamlet, Ophelia.
- examine Polonius' and Claudius' behavior in light of their definitions of madness.

1. Collect Act II projects. Lay the groundwork for the eavesdropping.
2. Students will "closely examine the text" of the soliloquy.
3. Student performer, as her project, will perform the soliloquy.
4. The students will share reactions and insights that the performance evoked.
5. The students will present their love objects and at least four are invited to tell the story of its meaning. Among the four is the student whose project is performance of Ophelia in this scene. She has devised letters and dry flowers and presents a fictional story their importance, but the other students do not know that this is fictional. She use these props in the following scene.
6. Move from this into the performance of the scene. During the scene, Hamlet rips up Ophelia's letters and flowers. (Ophelia as well as the audience strongly react to Hamlet "on a tear." ) Also during this scene, Hamlet becomes aware of the eavesdroppers. Hamlet loses it and Ophelia is frightened by his verbal and physical abuse.
7. Students will share reactions to scene and explore the reasons for Hamlet's behavior, words and Ophelia's reactions.
8. The students are asked to brainstorm other possibilities in playing the key moments and quotations. I share different interpretations of the scene I have seen in productions and ask the students to comment of the validity of each.
9. The students are invited to voice as vehemently as possible their reaction to Polonius' and Claudius' reaction to scene.
10. The students are asked to brainstorm for one minute a list of definitions and/ or images of madness. After sharing their ideas we come to a consensus as to working definitions of madness are drawn. Students then are asked to pick out moments of madness seen in this scene and defend their answers with one or more of the definitions.
11. Homework: The students are given sound and movement preparation worksheets. The worksheets divide Act III, ii into sections and they are assigned a particular section for their exercise. Also in the sheet is request for all students to be prepared to direct lines 270-276, i.e. Claudius' reaction and exit. Of course, they must read the entire scene.

Level and enthusiasm of participation serves as the best evaluative tool.

**Lesson ten: "The play is the thing"**

Objective: The students will:

- draw some conclusions about Shakespeare's ideas about acting and theater, and about Elizabethan performance
- problem solve the staging difficulties of the scene
- apply their definitions of madness where appropriate
- determine whether the play is the thing; how and why? who knows? how obvious is it?
- comment on the relationships
- note Horatio never tells us what he observed and determine three different subtexts for this.

1. The students divide into groups for the sound and movement. They have a ten minutes to prepare their section of the scene.
2. Each group presents their section. After each section the rest of the class asks questions, make observations and notes important quotations. The above objectives are realized through discussion after each section is presented.
3. When we get to lines 270-6, we play out several scenarios through the stage pictures homework. We will present at least three different interpretations reflecting the different degrees of revelation of guilt.
4. Homework: Review for test. Pick the ten most important quotations that capture the the essence of the play to this point. At least six speakers must be represented in the quotations.

Level and enthusiasm of participation serves as the best evaluative tool.

**Lesson eleven: "Dropping in"**

Objective: Review for test and introduce "Dropping in."

1. The students will participate in a dropping in exercise. As an actress, I'd rank dropping in a scene or soliloquy up there with my grandmother's gerabi cookies as one of life's great life experiences, but as a teacher I have found that dropping in a scene word by word does break open the scene for my students. It simply dissipates in power when done word by word with an class, perhaps because they do have the same investment in the process as an actress would. Yet I have had success dropping in key lines word by word and in dropping in soliloquys line by line.

   I will select a line, e.g."...you cannot play upon me."

   To drop in word by word, one does the following:

   A. Say the word and ask the students to repeat.

   B. Ask a series of questions about the word and after each question the students say the word as if answering the question. For example:

   Teacher:"you" Whom are you speaking to? Students: "you"
   How well do you know "you"? Students: "you"
   How well do they know you? "you"
   Are you speaking to your love interest? "you"
   (....and so on)

   (* Sometimes I ask individual students to answer rather than the group.)

C. Repeat for each word.
D. Repeat line and ask students to express. (I usually ask several students to proclaim the line individually.)

2. I would select a line and drop in the line. For example: "...I am glad to see you."
   - Are you saying this to your prom date?"...I am glad to see you."
   - How long has it been since you've seen this person? "...I am glad to see you." (...and so on)
3. The students break into five groups . They compare their homework list of quotes and and select two as group. Drop in the lines. I make sure that there is little overlap in chosen quotes. Then they proclaim/ act the lines for the class.
4. Pass back Act II projects. Read some from students who have read for Act I.
5. Presentation of phase one of the storytelling projects.
   For these projects the storytelling projects in adapted in this manner.
   - The presenter is one of the characters and will concentrate on revealing subtext and follow up reactions to a particular scene.
   - The presenter tells the character's story and in much like a Barbara Walters' interview format the class asks the character follow up/ follow through questions.

   I have always had students choose Ophelia and Hamlet as their story telling characters. If I am lucky I have a Horatio, Claudius and Gertrude stroyteller also.
6. This obviously serves as review but before the period ends, students are given the opportunity to ask specific questions about the test.

Level and enthusiasm of participation serves as the best evaluative tool.

**Lesson twelve: "Must I remember?"**
Objective: The students will demonstrate in writing knowledge of Elizabethan theater, literary devices, the play, and they will exercise their abilities to explore possibilities of interpretation and of staging.

Test.

**Lesson thirteen: "Scourge and minister"**
Objective: The students will discuss the soliloquy revelations of Claudius and Hamlet's reasoning in the delay of his revenge in III, ii. Students will discuss a film version of Act III, iv.

1. The students will be divided into five groups and given sections of Act III, ii. They drop in their lines and come up with a way to present their group interpretation.
2. The class will discuss Claudius' guilt and the order of his reasons for the murder.
3. The class will interpret Hamlet's delay of revenge and his morality versus Claudius'.
4. The students, after they draw out the set up of Act III, iv, view Gibson and Close playing of Act III, iv. Discussion follows as time allows. I share other versions I have seen.
5. Homework: What in the text justifies their version? Come up with different ways to play the following (freeze frames):
   "Is it the King?"

"Alas, he is mad?'
" Oh Hamlet, thou hast cleft my heart in twain."
" What shall I do?"

Also answer, "Do you think a kiss is justified by the lines? Where do you think it occur?" " Is Hamlet mad?", "What impact do you anticipate this scene will have on Gertrude?"

Level and enthusiasm of participation serves as the best evaluative tool.

**Lesson fourteen: " Oedipal Complex"**
Objective: The students are to interpret Act III, iv in terms of staging, text, climax and theme.

1. Through discuss and through viewing the freeze frame homework, the students will explore the complexities and fervor of this scene.
2. Presentation of Ophelia storyteller.
3. Introduction to status games. The students will participate in exercises in which actors establish status over others and change status within role plays.
4. Homework: Read Act IV, i-iv. Pick one line in scene one and in two and freeze frame a status relationship. Pick three lines in scene three that shows the shifting status and create freeze frames. Justify your interpretations. In ten words or less, capture the message of Hamlet's IV, iv soliloquy.

Level and enthusiasm of participation serves as the best evaluative tool.

**Lesson fifteen: "I must to England"**
Objective: Look at the fall out of the truth being revealed. Note the changing rhythm of scenes on Act IV and its impact on the drama.

1. Collect Act III projects.
2. Go over homework. In doing so, the students will draw conclusions about Hamlet's actions and the cat and mouse games he plays.
3. Set up the comparison of the "sons" through Hamlet's soliloquy. Students will present and defend their understanding of Hamlet's state of mind.
4. Presentation of Gertrude storyteller project.
5. Homework: Read IV, v. Concentrate on the status changes with King and Laertes. Construct three freeze frames. Compare Hamlet to Laertes.

Level and enthusiasm of participation serves as the best evaluative tool.

**Lesson sixteen: "Though this be madness, there is yet method in it."**
Objective: Students will draw out the method and motivation in Ophelia's madness. The students use their interpretative abilities to compare the Hamlet and Laertes.

1. Performance of Ophelia's mad scene, part one (1-75). One of the student projects usually provides this actress.
2. Students interpret the scene draw out the reasons for her madness.

3. Go over last night's status homework and draw out the dynamics of the Laertes entrance and rage.
4. Finish the performance of Ophelia's mad scene.
5. Discuss the flowers, the Laertes' factor and other points of interpretation and staging.
6. Summarize the message of Hamlet's letter. Discuss the dramatic impact of this device.
7. Homework: Read Act IV, vii. Fill out the information sheet I give as homework.

Level and enthusiasm of participation serves as the best evaluative tool.

**Lesson seventeen: "The plot sickens"**

Objective: The students will draw out the details of the plot against Hamlet, will discuss the death of Ophelia. The students will prepare for the changes in Hamlet as seen in act V.

1. Share the information about the plot from last night's homework.
2. Compare some of the lines in this scene to previous quotations, e.g. "To cut his throat in the church to Hamlet's lines in III, iii.
3. Discuss the death of Ophelia and its impact on the characters and audience.
4. Do a Vox Pox for the Sentence "Death is...." In Vox Pox each student one by one stands up, moves into a pose and proclaims their view by completing the sentence. Each student who follows the first must somehow connect to the evolving body sculpture.
5. Explain the comic relief device and this character's possible purpose.
6. Discuss the change in Hamlet.
7. Discuss the burial of Ophelia and behavior Hamlet and Laertes.
8. Gertrude storyteller presentation. (Student project.)
9. Body sculpt "Alas, he (she) is mad" by creating a moment in this scene. Is there any overlap between the vox pox and these sculptures. (The class would be in three groups.)
10. Homework: Read V,ii. Do a stage picture for five lines in duel, e.g. "Gertrude, do not drink."

Level and enthusiasm of participation serves as the best evaluative tool.

**Lesson eighteen: "..it will be now."**

Objective: The students will interpret Hamlet's final philosophy as seen in lines 220-225. The students will explore the final ironies of the final moments of the play.

1. Collect projects. The students will summarize the scene 1-200.
2. The students will discuss the lines 200-225 and juxtapose them to previous lines. They will comment the evolution of Hamlet's understanding of his purpose and power.
3. The students will present their stage pictures. Props, e.g. wine goblet, swords, pearl,etc.
4. Students will discuss their final understandings of the characters and their relationships.
5. Play 335 ,"I am dead.., to "Good night..."
6. Discuss the impact of this death scene and of Fortinbras' entrance.
7. Homework: Study for test.

**Lesson nineteen: "Adieu, adieu, adieu. Remember me."**

**Test.**

**Lesson Twenty: "An essay? 'O, I die, Horatio.'"**
Objective: To affirm students through their project presentations. Then-
To torture students with a critical essay assignment.

1. Collect projects #2-6.
2. Hand out critical essay sheets.

Please note that though this written in twenty lessons, it usually takes 26-28 class days.

# THREE WEEKS WITH HAMLET

Curriculum ideas for

MASTER WORKS INSTITUTE ON SHAKESPEARE

Mary Colvario
Boston Latin School
April 13, 1993

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# THREE WEEKS WITH HAMLET

## Description of the students to whom this unit will be taught

The discussion questions, writing assignments, and creative activities in this unit are directed to academically talented eleventh graders who have already read several plays by Shakespeare and who feel relatively comfortable with Shakespearean language.

## Goals/purpose of the unit

* Students will understand the dramatic structure of the play exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and the denouement.
* Students will see how Hamlet fulfills the definition of a tragedy, i.e., a serious drama in which the protagonist comes to a sorrowful end because of a flaw in his character
* Students will discuss a variety of interpretations that can be given to the written text.
* Students will discuss all major characters, discussing how each seems to be responsible for his own fate.
* Students will examine the various parallel situations that exist within the play, e.g., both Hamlet and Laertes seek to avenge a father's death, both Hamlet and Ophelia appear mad, both Ophelia and Gertrude seem sullied by the men they love.

**Discussion questions**

Of course, there are hundreds/thousands/millions of questions to discuss; these are some I have found particularly useful.

Before the students begin their reading, ask them to discuss how they would feel if they returned home from college for their much loved father's funeral only to have their mother marry their father's brother within a few months.

Act I. The Exposition

1. Compare the opening scene of Hamlet with its talk of a ghost to that of Macbeth with its witches or to that of Romeo and Juliet with its street fighting. Note how key images that remain throughout the play are placed immediately before us.

2. Discuss the kind of image Claudius the King projects in his own court. (See the one-day lesson "The Use of Rhetoric in Hamlet: A Look at How Claudius Controls Situations Through Language.")

3. Characterize the Danish court at Elsinore, considering the presence of the ghost, the actions of Claudius, Gertrude, and Polonius, and the general reputation it enjoys. What exactly is "rotten in the state of Denmark"?

4. Compare and contrast Claudius to Hamlet's father (aka the Ghost).

5. List all the problems Hamlet faces by the end of Act I. How would they react in a similar situation?

Act II. The Rising Action

1. Examine how people use others to find out about someone:
    a. Polonius sends Reynoldo to France to spy on Laertes,
    b. Claudius uses Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to spy on

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Hamlet,

c. Claudius and Polonius use Ophelia to spy on Hamlet

d. Hamlet uses the players to discover the validity of the Ghost's accusations about Claudius

For each case, discuss the willingness of characters to be so used. What are their motives? Particularly, why does Ophelia allow herself to be an accomplice to Claudius and Polonius? What obligations do we all have when becoming involved in activities, particularly those orchestrated by our superiors?

2. In an attempt to characterize Hamlet's so-called madness, consider these four situations:

a. Hamlet in Ophelia's room (as described to us by Ophelia in II, i, 98-111)

b. Hamlet with Polonius (II, ii, 190-233)

c. Hamlet with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern (II, ii, 234-390)

d. Hamlet with the players (II, ii, 430-555)

In each case, consider the person with Hamlet, his regard for that person, the motives for his behavior.

Act III: The Climax

1. When we finally see Hamlet and Ophelia supposedly alone for the first time, what indication do we have of their relationship? Consider all the possibilities to explain Hamlet's treatment of Ophelia both here and before The Murder of Gonzago begins.

2. How is our opinion of Claudius affected by his aside (III, i, 57-62), by his calling for the lights, and by his attempt to pray?

3. When we finally see Hamlet and his mother alone for the first time,

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what indications do we have of their relationship? Consider the dilemma that Gertrude faces, i.e., to whom does she owe allegiance--her husband who is accused of murder or her son who is seemingly talking to the air?

4. What is the climax of the play, i.e., the point beyond which the action cannot continue without a definite change taking place?

5. What is the first result of Hamlet's decision not to kill Claudius while he is seemingly at prayer? What will be the many consequences of his accidentally killing Polonius?

Act IV. The Falling Action

1. Discuss how so many things are changing, e.g., Hamlet's departure for England, Ophelia's madness, Laertes' return from France.

2. What role does Fortinbras play here as well as earlier in the play?

3. Discuss Laertes as the foil of Hamlet. Certainly these two young men share several things in common, however, each acts so differently from the other, revealing incredibly diverse personalities. Who is more admirable? Why?

4. Note once again how Claudius uses language to manipulate Laertes (IV, v, 120-235 and IV, vii). Consider his emotional appeals, his use of rhetoric, his use of flattery, and his ability to assume control.

5. What are the reasons for Ophelia's madness? Who is to blame for her madness and for her death?

Act V. The Denouement

1. Of what use is the gravediggers scene?

2. Consider the appropriateness of the deaths of Polonius, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, Ophelia, Gertrude, Laertes, Claudius, and Hamlet. How is

each responsible for his own death?

3. What is Hamlet's tragic flaw?

4. Consider Horatio's role in this final scene as well as his importance in the entire play.

5. Who would make the best ruler of Denmark: Hamlet, Laertes, or Fortinbras? What exactly are the traits required to be a good leader?

6. Why is Fortinbras, an outsider, made the ruler at the very end?

## Writing Assignments

Some typical essay topics:

1. Discuss Hamlet's state of mind at the end of Act II. Consider his soliloquies and his behavior towards other characters as well as what others say about him. Include quotations and other specific references to the text to illustrate your ideas.

2. Paraphrase a favorite soliloquy by Hamlet.

3. Shakespeare emphasizes the tragic nature of the play by a series of parallel siutations and characters, often with ironic duplications and contrasts. For example, Laertes and Hamlet both want to avenge the death of a murdered father. Likewise, Hamlet and Opelia both appear insane as a result of their fathers' deaths. Also, Gertrude and Ophelia are both victimized by plotting males. Select two of these or similar parallel situations, describe how the two characters react to their similar situations, and tell what you learn about both characters through their actions.

Some creative ideas:

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1. Write an interior monologue for one of the following characters in the situation that is described:

   a. Gertrude during Claudius' opening speech in [illegible]
   b. Ophelia before she is going to see Hamlet in [illegible]
   c. Gertrude while she is waiting for Hamlet to come to her room in III, iv
   d. Laertes after he and Claudius have arranged for Hamlet's death
   e. Claudius after he and Laertes have arranged for Hamlet's death
   f. Horatio after Hamlet's death

2. Of course, we all remember Horatio's eulogy for Hamlet: "Now cracks a noble heart. Good night, sweet prince,/And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!" Ask the students to write two-line eulogies, preferably in blank verse, for the other characters in Hamlet.

3. A. C. Bradley in Shakespearean Tragedy writes about what is "the centre of the tragic impression. This central feeling is the impression of waste." Considering this idea, write all that could have been if the tragedy of Hamlet had not occurred.

4. After discussing various examples of figurative language used in Hamlet, have students write their own similes and metaphors for the major characters. Give students five to ten minutes in class for writing, then have every student read aloud this creative effort. (See attached sheet for examples of metaphorical language used in Act IV; copies of this sheet might be first distributed to facilitate discussion.)

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## Creative Activities

1. Watch scenes from the various films of Hamlet. Two videos worth using are the 1948 Olivier version and the Zeffirelli film with Mel Gibson and Glenn Close. The Nicol Williamson Hamlet, directed by Tony Richardson, is also useful. (All are readily available for about $20.00 each.)

Fast forward the videos before class to concentrate on two versions of the same scene that the class has just finished discussing. Since students have already formed an idea of how the scene should be played, they usually have strong opinions of the strengths and weaknesses of the various interpretations. Listed below are suggestions for scenes that create lively discussion.

   a. Hamlet's meeting his father's Ghost in Act I
   b. Hamlet's meeting with Ophelia in Act III
      (The beginning of the Nicole Williamson version is markedly different from the other two.)
   c. Hamlet in Gertrude's room in Act III
   d. The final scene of Act V

(See the April, 1993, English Journal for articles that tell of two other teachers' experiences with using films of Hamlet. Douglas P. Felter's "Exploring Shakespeare through the Cinematic Image: Seeing Hamlet" and Wilbur H. Sowder, Jr.'s "The Thing's the Play: Doing Hamlet.")

2. Have students read aloud as much as possible. Eleventh graders enjoy the spirited confrontations between the various characters, e.g., Hamlet and the Ghost, Hamlet and Ophelia, Hamlet with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, Hamlet and Gertrude, Claudius and Laertes, Hamlet and Laertes.

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3. After the class has completed reading and discussing the first three acts of the play, have them review those acts for homework and write five to ten questions about those acts that the class has not yet discussed It's amazing how much there is to discuss, students also realize how a discussion is never really complete

4 While students are reading the various scenes require that after any reading assignment, they write at least one page of commentary in their notebooks Encourage them to do more than simple plot summary; suggest instead personal reaction to events, comparison between Hamlet and other literary works, comparison between Hamlet and any world events, lists of favorite lines, questions about parts not understood Begin each day in class by having three to five students read aloud their reading logs.

5 Encourage students to memorize lines from the play to declaim in class Several students in any class enjoy this activity.

6 Have students read Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead to report on Tom Stoppard's use of Hamlet to create his play

7 After the class has finished reading Hamlet, have the students identify basic ambiguities that exist throughout the play, e.g., Should the Ghost be regarded as a good or evil force? Was Gertrude involved with Claudius before her husband's death? Is Polonius to be regarded as only or more than a pompous sycophant in the Danish court? What exactly was the relationship between Hamlet and Ophelia? Then divide the class into groups of four students, and assign to each group one side of an argument. Let the groups meet to compile evidence in support of their side and to select the student who will represent each group Then debate each topic, and have the class decide which side is more convincing

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Hamlet, Act IV — Use of Figurative Language

Directions. In each of the following quotations, some type of figurative language, e.g., simile, metaphor, hyperbole, is used. Explain how Shakespeare uses these figures of speech to express his ideas and the ideas of his characters. Then find at least three other examples of the use of figurative language in Act IV.

1. *King* How does Hamlet?
*Queen* Mad as the sea and wind, when both contend
Which is the mightier.

2. *King* So much was our love,
We would not understand what was most fit,
But, like the owner of a foul disease,
To keep it from divulging, let it feed
Even on the pith of life.

3. *King* where is he gone?
*Queen* To draw apart the body he hath killed,
O'er whom his very madness, like some ore
Among a mineral of metals base,
Shows itself pure.

4. *Hamlet* To my shame, I see
The imminent death of twenty thousand men,
That, for a fantasy and trick of fame,
Go to their graves like beds.

5. *Gent* The ocean, overpeering of his list,
Eats not the flats with more impetuous haste
Than young Laertes, in a riotous head,
O'erbears your officers.

6. *Laertes* To his [Polonius'] good friends thus wide I'll ope my arms,
And like the kind life-rendering pelican,
Repast them with my blood.

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SHAKESPEARE MASTER WORKS INSTITUTE
FOUR WEEK CURRICULUM PLAN FOR HAMLET
MARK HOWLAND
TABOR ACADEMY
4/13/93

I. PHILOSOPHY--The bottom line is, I think, to have students see/experience Shakespeare as theatre rather than merely as literature, to help them understand and appreciate his expertise and complexity, and to understand that what he has to say can be meaningful to them (as well as enjoyable to listen to and/or witness).

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDENTS--As seniors at Tabor, these high school students will have studied two, possibly three, Shakespeare plays previously (ROMEO AND JULIET, MERCHANT OF VENICE, TEMPEST), but that doesn't honestly count for much in many cases. Most of the students are of average ability with some of above average; some will be of above average motivation. They are all college bound, male and female, boarding and day students. Some attend Tabor for an athletic program--hockey, sailing--while others attend because of the benefits offered at a private school--small class size and the opportunity for extra help.

III. GOALS--Students will hopefully gain a basic understanding of and appreciation for:

a) theatre
b) Shakespeare as a dramatist and poet
c) Shakespeare's England
d) HAMLET as a play that speaks to them in their worlds
e) small group dynamics and process

IV. LESSON PLAN--The play is about 140 pages long. If read in three weeks, the assignments are roughly ten pages per night. I've tried saving the fourth week to go back and take a second look at the play. In addition to reading each night, each student is asked to keep a "dialogue journal." For each reading assignment each student makes an entry in his/her journal. I have in the past provided a model for them for the first reading assignment. (I've also gone without the model and, to be honest, I'm not convinced the model helped in the long run.)

As its name implies, a dialogue journal is a journal where the reader establishes a chemistry or dialogue with the text. It is set up in the following way: students open their notebooks (spiral or three-ring) so that they have two blank sheets facing them. They divide each sheet vertically into halves either by drawing a line down the center of each or by folding the sheets toward the spine or center of the notebook. In either event they should now have four columns. Moving from left to right, they should label the columns "NOTES," "OBSERVATIONS," "RESPONSES," and "FURTHER REFLECTIONS."

As they read, they should number (1, 2, 3 . . .) and record in their notebooks quotes from the play, those things which strike, intrigue, or confuse them, those things which they feel might be important. These are recorded in the "NOTES" column. (I have explained these items as things which they would highlight in a text.) For each quote they include the page and line numbers so that others may reference them. In the next column, "OBSERVATIONS," they write WHY they noted each quote, being careful to number the observations (#1, 2, 3. . .) so that they correspond to the NOTES. (I have explained this as their marginal explanation for why they decided to highlight something in a text, why it intrigued or confused them, why they felt it was important to highlight.)

When they get into their small groups (usually three - four to a group) in class, students trade notebooks. In the third column, "RESPONSES," their small group members add their comments. They may speak of their experience with the text and compare it with the owner of the notebook. The focus is to give the owner of the notebook something to think about. As the notebooks are passed around to other members of the group, I, as the second or third reader may comment in the RESPONSE column on the notebook owner's NOTES and OBSERVATIONS and/or on the RESPONSES of other readers before me. In any event the idea is still to give the owner of the notebook something further to think about. (See sample journal at end.)

The final column, "FURTHER REFLECTIONS," is for the owner of the notebook to write in after he/she has read the comments of the members of his/her small group.

Many classes may be spent sharing these journals in small groups and then discussing the ideas which come out of them in the larger group. The journals have a way both of forcing the students to wrestle with the texts and of forming the basis for much class discussion.

Students maintain these small groups throughout the study of HAMLET. I select the members for the groups, making sure there is an appropriate mix of ability, sexes, maturity, etc. I've also used these small groups for projects and presentations which may take place in WEEK FOUR.

ORIENTATION (BEFORE WEEK ONE)
DAY ONE

I lead the students on a tour of the school's theatre(s) and other spaces that could be used for theatre (the gymnasium, playing fields, chapel, headmaster's office, and so on). Theatre spaces are discussed.

Back in the classroom, through slides, an overhead, book pictures or other media, other stages and spaces used in history (Greek and Roman, Elizabethan, modern) are looked at and discussed.

After reviewing what constitutes a theatre space, I pose the question: What is theatre? Students freewrite for five or so minutes and then discuss. The discussion should lead to and include answering other questions: Who has been to a play? What was it like? How is a play different from television, computer games, movies? Why do people go to the theatre? Why do we (if we do) need the theatre? What is its function?

The purpose of this exercise is to get students to begin to think about the play as theatre, to begin to think about what theatre is all about.

DAY TWO

I come into class and write "Shakespeare" on the board. Then I ask the students, "What do you know about Shakespeare? What is your history with him? When someone mentions 'Shakespeare,' what reaction do you have?"

Students freewrite for five minutes. Then, using the same questions, they leave the class to interview as many people as they can in the next twenty minutes (class length of 40 minutes). They should be encouraged to interview as many different types of people as possible: secretaries, custodians, teachers, fellow students, administrators, etc. The last fifteen minutes of class are spent sharing their responses in the whole group. (I do this interviewing with them, and my own most fascinating and memorable interview responses have come from secretaries.)

The purpose of this exercise is to get all the "baggage" out on the table: the correct and incorrect, accurate and inaccurate perceptions, notions, attitudes, etc. At the same time that students need to be allowed to feel and express their concerns and misgivings, they need to realize that, more than perhaps any writer in history, we all come to Shakespeare, having read him or not, with a lot of ideas and attitudes. A good question becomes, Why is this so? Why can most of us quote from HAMLET ("To be or not to be. . ." "Frailty, thy name is woman. . ." "Get thee to a nunnery. . ." "To thine own self be true. . ." "Something is rotten in the state of Denmark. . ." etc.) before we've ever read the play?

DAY THREE

Body Sculpting: I divide the students up into their small groups and give members of each group a notecard with a quote from the play on it. Examples include "O, vengeance," "I know not seems, madam," "I shall obey, my lord," "Alas, he's mad," "O, my prophetic soul," "To die, to sleep--perchance to dream," "O heavy burden," "Why ask you this?" Each group member freewrites for several minutes in response to the line, then group members share ideas about the line in the next few minutes. From these shared ideas each group creates a body sculpture that interprets the line. The picture may move but must end in a freeze. During the sculpting, the only words spoken are the line itself. Groups present their picture-sculptures one at a time. After each group presents, the other groups comment on what they saw, allowing for various interpretations.

The purpose of this exercise is to get the students moving, thinking of drama and acting, thinking of transmuting script to performance.

I use what is left of the period to remind the students of how to read Shakespeare: use the notes, the "Dramatis Personae" page, the stage directions, read aloud, try to see and hear the action, and so on.

WEEK ONE

The dialogue journals provide for structure during class periods and a chance to pool information and answer questions at the ends of classes. Usually, I like to save the last ten to fifteen minutes for such a large group discussion. Sometimes the journals furnish discussion material; sometimes I steer the kids toward certain topics (often the very topics many of them have been discussing as I've eavesdropped on their small groups during class periods).

By the end of Act I, I find it's often helpful to take a barometer reading on understanding. I've done this in several ways. First, I ask the students to choose a character and brainstorm (first individually and then in small groups) two lists of qualities for that character, one list identifying the ways in which the character is like the student(s), the other list indicating differences. This checks understanding, prompts small and then large group discussion, and further fosters the making of connections between the text and the reader.

I have tried other strategies as well. I have the students list all the conflicts from the first act, liken those conflicts to conflicts in their lives or to conflicts which they see taking place in the world, and make guesses at possible resolutions to those conflicts.

On any given day at the beginning of class, I have had students play what I call the fact game, where, going round the room one at a time, students recall a fact from the previous night's reading, anything that amounts to a fact rather than an opinion. For instance, for the first reading assignment facts include:

1) The play begins with a question.

2) The question is "Who's there?"
3) The question is asked by a guard.
4) It is asked of another guard.
5) These guards are atop a castle.
6) The name of the castle is Elsinore.
7) This exchange takes place at night.
8) It is cold.
9) It's just after 12:00 midnight.
10) A change of guard takes place.

And so on. The facts may be as specific as the kids can get, but there must be no opinions and no repeated facts. (Like the "Digression Game" alluded to in CATCHER IN THE RYE, I have sometimes given students the option of shouting "Repeat" or "Opinion" when the rules are violated.) Moving quickly around the room, we see how long we can sustain the fact-finding. The exercise checks understanding (and lack of it), is fun and a bit competitive, and gives the kids some confidence as they realize how much they do understand. This may be done with books open or closed.

I have also checked understanding and made connections at the end of the first act by having small groups translate what they know of the action and events of that act into a broadcast of the "Elsinore Nightly News." The best groups work out a variety of reports: weather from information indicated in the text, sports (fencing matches, falconry), national news (death of a king, sighting of the ghost), international news (sending of ambassadors to Norway, death of another king, preparations for war). This exercise gets group members working together, presenting and performing, researching and pooling knowledge. I've had groups evaluate each other on this performance on the basis of both creativity and presentation.

## WEEK TWO

While dialogue journals may provide much of the meat for discussion, I sometimes throw in some ideas for students to think about or direct their attention to important scenes.

When we take a look at the scenes, we often try to stage them both by reading the original and by improvising once we discuss the basic action. Scenes that have worked well in the past are Claudius' "Inaugural Speech" scene (I, ii), the Ghost Visitation scenes (I, v; III, iv), the Nunnery scene (III, i), the Play Within a Play scene (III, ii), the Mad Ophelia scene (IV, v). These and others work to help the students visualize the play. Various interpretations are encouraged. Information about Shakespeare's stage usually works nicely here. When playing these scenes, we look for stage directions which the lines indicate. In any event, the students are encouraged again to experience the play as theatre, to make decisions and choices about acting and directing.

To warm them up for these exercises in acting and directing, I often have students cast the play using people in the school community--faculty, administrators, staff, students. They are always asked to justify or explain their choices. Often it helps them to have a particular scene in mind when casting. In addition, I have them cast the play with tv/stage/film actors. Once again, justification for choices is given. These tasks work well in small groups.

Sometimes I give the students specific things/topics to think about. These include disease imagery and military imagery, references to theatre and acting, parallel situations (father--son relationships), Hamlet's evolving character as revealed by the soliloquies, Hamlet as a problem-solver and decision-maker, themes of isolation/alienation and manipulation, Hamlet's relationships with women, word "locks" or repetition of certain words and phrases (for example, references to "blood," "passion," "reason," "words vs. deeds").

I also like to show bits and pieces of various versions of the play to students and have them compare their impressions with the interpretations of directors. In the past I have used Olivier, the BBC production with Jacoby, the Kevin Kline version, and, most recently, the Mel Gibson version.

Though I haven't been able to locate them as often as I'd like, I've found recordings to be helpful as well, particularly for the soliloquies. Burton and McKellan (?) have been useful.

## WEEK THREE

Again, between dialogue journals, discussion of particular topics I choose, and playing and improvising of scenes, much of the time is taken up.

Additional exercises at this point include declamations where students select, rehearse, and recite a dozen or so lines from the play. As a change of pace, I set this up a little differently. (As with improvisation and playing of scenes, these recitations take place in a theatre space in the school.) I divide the class in half, sit half in the audience (in a row) and ask tne other half to take the stage. The performers are asked to recite their memorized speeches at the same time, each trying to draw the attention of the audience. When the performers are finished, the audience gets to state who got their attention and how they did so. The performers begin again. (Sometimes this also works nicely by spreading the performers out all over the theatre to recite speeches at the same time.) Finally, they declaim individually. They get several chances with the audience offering advice in between times. Typically, the students get a grade for this exercise. I have graded them myself and have gotten input from the audience. Choosing their own speeches over the four week period, they may do this exercise two or three times.

## WEEK FOUR

When we complete the play, we have an opportunity to study it further by backing away from it a bit. Oral presentations become the focus for a variety of topics, ranging from ones about Shakespeare's England such as:

1. Elizabethan social class structure
2. Military tactics, weapons, battles
3. Sports
4. Education
5. Scientific world view
6. Religion
7. Lives of the royals
8. Marriage and family life

to other related topics such as:

1. Definition of tragedy and the tragic vision with comparisons to other tragedies or books with tragic elements they've read (Greek tragedy, Death of a Salesman, Ethan Frome, The Great Gatsby, Romeo and Juliet, etc.)--Question: What is tragedy? the tragic vision? Why would someone write tragedies?
2. Research on states of mental disorder: neurosis, psychosis, manic depressiveness, schizophrenia--Question: What is sanity? insanity? What relevance does either or do both have to the seeker of truth?
3. Problem-solving and decision-making--Question: What theories/models exist about both? How do we become better problem-solvers and decision-makers?

Any of the above may become paper topics or oral reports. In addition, some other creative topics I have used are:

1. Write a senior (yearbook) page for Hamlet or Ophelia.
2. Write Hamlet's Wittenberg University application essay.

3. Write a missing scene (most often ones that take place between one scene and the next).
4. Write letters Hamlet and Ophelia exchanged.
5. Write a resume for Claudius as a candidate to be the CEO for a Fortune 500 advertising/marketing firm or write his "farewell" speech to Congress (at the end of his term of office as President).
6. Write a psychiatrist's report on the dysfunctional nature of Hamlet's or Ophelia's family.
7. Write obituaries for the dead of the play.

Week four provides an opportunity to return to the play after some of the other related projects have been completed. Because of these projects (listed above) and because of its difficulty (on a first reading), new interest or light may be brought to the play. Most recently, I have returned to the play to look at its language more closely, to examine speeches (the soliloquies, Claudius' long speeches) more fully now that the kids know what happens at the end. Claudius' speeches in particular shed new light on his character. Since they know of his guilt, the students read his words very differently and look at how he relates to others (Polonius, Gertrude, Laertes, Hamlet) in a new way. They are sometimes ready at this point to pay more attention to specific word-locks and patterns of images, metaphors, and other figures of speech.

## EVALUATION

Forms of evaluation vary from year to year. Basically, I've tried everything I can think of including:

1) reading quizzes
2) objective tests (the first on Acts I - III, the second on the last two)
3) dialogue journals
4) class discussion and small group work
5) small group presentations, declamations, and oral reports
6) creative and analytical papers

Because not all of this has worked with equal success, I haven't settled on one "system" yet. I never seem to weave in as much theatre as I'd like to. (It would be wonderful, for instance, to take the class to a couple of productions of HAMLET each year or to have the class put the play on, but this is neither possible nor practical.) The most powerful single tool I've used is the dialogue journal. It has been powerful because kids have had to wrestle with the text on their own and then in their small groups. I'd say roughly 80% of the students I've confered with who have written these journals have said that this was the first Shakespeare play they understood. They add that they felt a tremendous sense of obligation to the group, that if they came in unprepared, it really fouled up the group's process/progress. My sense is that because teachers such as I have explained the plays to them in the past--through lecture primarily--they haven't even had to read them. Although they struggle with the journal/reading and become tired with it, they come away feeling they've accomplished something. On the plus side is the fact that they have an experience with the text which is personal and an experience with the small group that is valuable; on the down side is the fact that they miss a good deal in the play (which is understandable). I've found I have a tough job: to balance asking _them_ to establish a dialogue with HAMLET with giving them _my_ dialogue with the play.

| Wed. Oct/14th Notes | OBSERVATIONS |
|---|---|
| 1. He does confess, he feels himself distracted. But from what cause a will by no means speak.<br>(III, i, 5 & 6) | Hamlet knows that whatever he'd tell his friends, they would go back & tell the king & his mother. He knows that the king & his mom are trying by every means to find out what's wrong & he knows that. I think he's definitely playing with their minds. |
| 2. How smart a lash that speech doth give my conscience. The harlot's cheek, beautified w/ plastering art, Is not more ugly to the thing that helps it Than is my deed to my most painted word. O heavy burden.<br>(III, i, 50-54) | Ah-ha! I have a feeling that the king murdered his bro & is feeling guilty 'bout it. I can't tell what the reference to the devil (line has to do w/ how he feels guilty - maybe he feels as if he's going to go to hell for murdering his brother? |
| 3. When he himself might his quietus make, with a bare bodkin? Who would fardels bear, To grunt and sweat under a weary life, But that the dread of ~~death~~ something after death,<br>(III, i, 75-78) | 3. Very interesting. I'm wondering if he's trying to figure out how the King was murdered or if he's plotting his actions to kill the new King. He's talking about the reasons to die & he also talks about a dagger. Is this foreshadowing? |
| 4. Thus conscience does make cowards of us all, And thus the native hue of resolution Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought.<br>(III, i, 83-85) | 4. This is making me think that with the play & whatnot, the king's conscience will get so heavy that he'll admit to murdering the king. |

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| Notes | Observations |
|---|---|
| 7. My words fly up, my thoughts remain below. Words without thoughts never to heaven go.<br>(III, iii, 97-98)<br>Tues. Oct 20th, 1992 | This is deep. I think the king is tryin to confess but only to satisfy himself ~~[illegible]~~ lite s saying the right words, bu he doesn't mean them, his mind is somewhere else. In terms of God, he trying to rid himself of his sin by saying what he thinks God wants to hear. In a sense, he's trying ~~to~~ please others + make himself be that he did the right thing by confessing. |
| 1. These words like daggers enter in my ears.<br>(III, iv, 96) | The queen can't listen to Hamlet go on about her dead husband + her new "mildewed ear" husband. Each time he goes further, he hurts her more. |
| 2. Conceit in ~~weakest~~ bodies strongest works.<br>(III, iv, 115) | The ghost is tell Hamlet to play a game with the queen's mind so she doesn't think that H. was really talking to a ghost - that she was imagining it. |
| 3. Refrain tonight. And that shall lend a kind of easiness To the next abstinence the next more easy;<br>(III, iv, 169-171) | H. wants his mom not to sleep w/ C. he guarantees her that every time she doesn't sleep w/ him, it'll get easier for her to reject him. Hamlet doesn't want his mother to touch the murderer of his father. |

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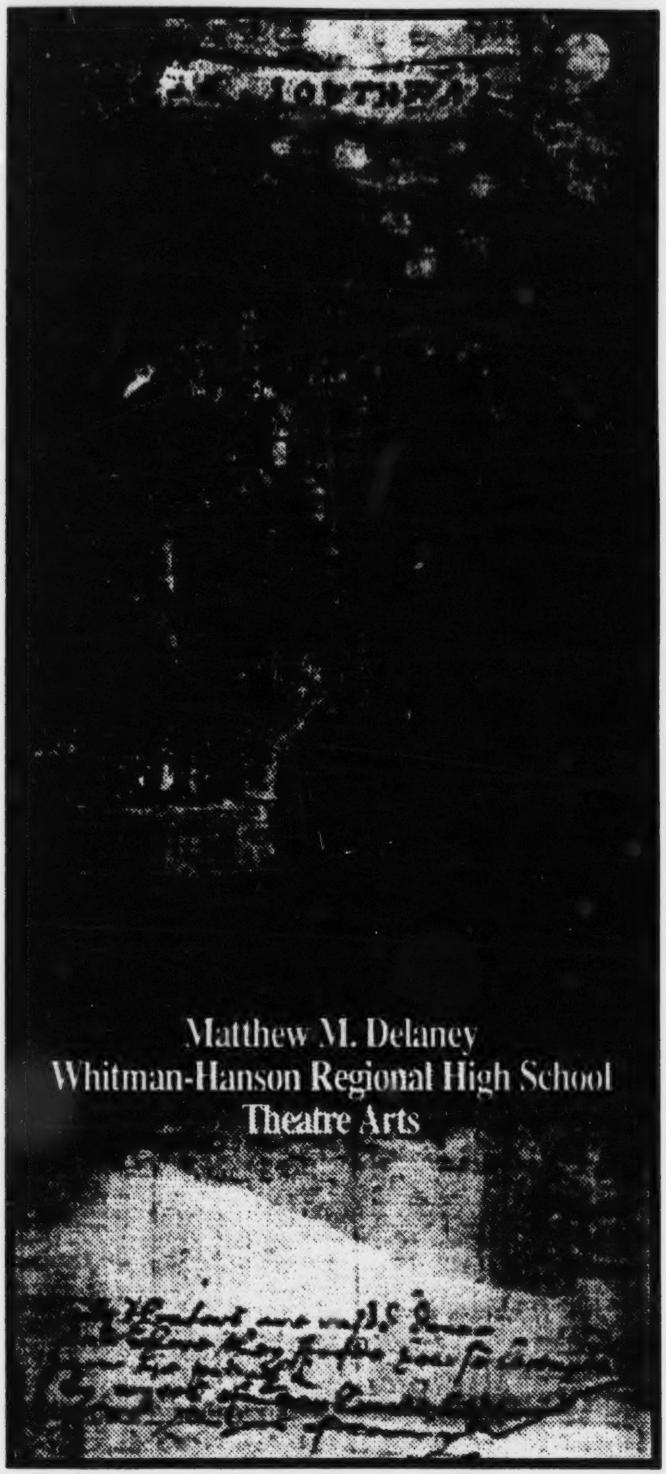
# Master Works Institute

# Hamlet
## Curriculum/Unit



Matthew M. Delaney
Whitman-Hanson Regional High School
Theatre Arts

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## STUDENT/PROFILE

This unit is intended for an advanced junior class at a regional high school that is composed primarily of white, middle class, suburban, college-track students. The class is: Honors English III.

## RATIONALE

The students in this section have previously had a focused and high level of exposure to the works of William Shakespeare in earlier studies, and are capable of advanced study concepts. This lesson presents many aspects of *Hamlet* for consideration. It is intended to foster interest and pleasure in the study of the works of Shakespeare through a better understanding of his time, the historical and literary influences and the meaning of a particular work—in this case, *Hamlet*.

## HAMLET/UNIT

*Time: 31 days*

## INTRODUCTION

1. Introduction to Elizabethan Theatre
2. Biography of Shakespeare
3. Influences on Shakespeare
4. Renaissance principles
5. *The Spanish Tragedy*
    a. historical significance
    b. summary of theme
6. Elements of a tragedy
7. Shakespeare's influence on vocabulary
    a. vocabulary handout
8. "Fun With Hamlet & His Friends"
    a. discussion of concept
9. Hamlet/Unit Introduction
    a. original story/Saxo Grammaticus
    b. comparison of relationships

## HAMLET

1. Act I
2. Act II
3. Act III
4. Act IV
5. Act V

## UNIT/OUTLINE

Students will be able to:

1. Explain the influences of Shakespeare's life on *Hamlet*.
2. Explain the influences of Shakespeare's actors on *Hamlet*.
3. Explain the influences of Renaissance beliefs on *Hamlet*.
    a. great chain of being
    b. balance and harmony
4. Explain the influences of *The Spanish Tragedy* on *Hamlet*.
5. Identify and trace certain elements of classical tragedy throughout the 5 acts of *Hamlet*.
6. Discuss the psychological aspects of the characters of *Hamlet*.
7. Locate and explain the turning point of the play.
8. Discuss the themes of the play.
9. Define and explain the use in context of vocabulary taken from *Hamlet*.
10. Complete an essay on some aspect of *Hamlet*.
11. Identify and define certain literary devices used in the play.

12. Memorize and analyze Hamlet's "To be or not to be" soliloquy"
13. Quote and analyze well known passages from the play.

## SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

1. Discuss Shakespeare's life focusing on:
    a. birth and death dates
    b. activities in London
    c. theatre in London
    d. King's players
    e. use of country images such as flowers and barnyard animals.
2. Discuss the influences of the acting, focusing on:
    a. Richard Burbage
    b. first folios
3. quartos

C. Discuss the influence of Renaissance principles focusing on:
   1. the great chain of being
   2. balance, harmony, moderation
   3. 4 humours
   4. humanism
   5. ghosts, witches
   6. Renaissance man
   7. Renaissance woman

D. Discuss the influence of *The Spanish Tragedy* focusing on the elements of:
   1. inherited wrong
   2. assumed insanity
   3. play within a play
   4. dark plottings
   5. frequent fights, both verbal and physical
   6. a series of assassinations

E. Discuss the use of elements of classical tragedy focusing on:
   1. tragic hero
   2. tragic flaw
   3. epiphany
   4. catastrophe
   5. catharsis

F. Discuss the themes of the play focusing on:
   1. inversion of the natural order
   2. the difference between appearance (illusion) and reality
   3. "To thine own self be true"
   4. political corruption
   5. honor versus morality

G. Locate vocabulary in context and apply it to the characters and/or events in the novel

H. Read and discuss Act I, scene 1 focusing on:
  1. purpose of opening scene
  2. appearance of ghost
  3. Horatio's purposes
  4. Fortinbras

I. Administer reading check for Act I, scene 1

J. Read and discuss Act I, scene 2 focusing on:
  1. characters
    a. Claudius
    b. Gertrude
    c. Polonius

  2. Hamlet's soliloquy
    a. "Frailty thy name is woman"
    b. mood swings
      1. melancholy
      2. manic-depression

K. Read and discuss Act I, scene 3 focusing on:
  1. Relationship between Polonius and
      a. Ophelia
      b. Laertes
    2. Renaissance woman

L. Read and discuss Act I, scenes 4 & 5 focusing on:
    1. ghost's story
      a. need for revenge
      b. role of Gertrude
      c. obligation of Hamlet
    2. inherited wrong
    3. assumed insanity
    4. Hamlet's conflict
      a. honor versus morality
      b. "The time is out of joint..."
      c. "There are more things in heaven and earth Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy."
      d. tragic flaw of indecision

M. Administer reading check of Act I, scenes 4 &5

N. Read and discuss Act II, scene 1 focusing on:
    1. Polonius' relationship with:
      a. Laertes
      b. Ophelia

2. theme of lack of communication

O. Read and discuss Act II, scene 2 focusing on:
  1. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern
    a. purpose
    b. personalities
    c. Hamlet's treatment of
  2. Polonius' speech to Claudius
  3. dark plotting against Hamlet by
    a. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern
    b. Claudius and Polonius
  4. Hamlet's mood swings
  5. feeding imagery
    a. hatred of Polonius-fishmonger
    b. corruption of Ophelia
  6. "What a piece of work is man."
  7. "I am but mad north-north-west..."
  8. Players
    a. play within a play
    b. murder of Gonzago
      1. change in emphasis on Queen
      2. change in murders
        a. brother kills brother
        b. nephew kills uncle
  9. Hamlet's soliloquy
    a. manic mood
    b. excuse for delay
    c. "The play's the thing..."

P. Administer reading check on soliloquy

Q. Assign essay on Hamlet's behavior
R. Read and discuss Act III, scene 1 focusing on:
  1. start of Claudius' loss of balance
    a. guilt
    b. spying
    c. "How smart a lash that speech doth give my conscience."
  2. "To be or not to be" soliloquy
    a. depressive mood
    b. analogy
    c. fear of unknown
    d. progressive development of theme
    e. end of thoughts of suicide
  3. the nunnery scene
    a. Hamlet's treatment of Ophelia
    b. ambiguity of word "nunnery"
    c. lack of communication
    d. "O what a noble mind is here o'erthrown"

to palate (Shakespeare meant "to relish")
pale-faced
to pander
passado (a kind of sword-thrust)
paternal
pauser ("one who hesitates")
pebbled ("pebbly")
pedant (Shakespeare was referring to a schoolmaster)
pedantical
pendulous (Shakespeare meant "hanging over")
to perplex
perusal
to petition
pignut (a sort of tuber)
pious
please-man ("yes-man" or "parasite")
plumpy ("plump")
posture (Shakespeare seems to have meant something like "position" or "positioning") [earlier than *OED*]
pouncet-box ("small box for perfumes")
prayerbook [earlier than *OED*]
priceless
profitless
Promethean
protester (Shakespeare meant "one who affirms")
published (Shakespeare meant "commonly recognized")
puh! (an interjection signifying disgust and/or condescension)
to puke
puppy-dog
pushpin (Shakespeare was referring to a children's game)
on purpose
quarrelsome
in question (as in "the ____ in question")
radiance
to rant
rascally [earlier than *OED*]
rawboned ("very gaunt")
razorable ("fit to be shaved")
reclusive
refractory
reinforcement (Shakespeare meant "renewed force")
reliance
remorseless
reprieve (the noun)
resolve (the noun)
restoration [earlier than *OED*]
•restraint (as "reserve")
retirement
to reverb ("to re-echo")
revokement ("revocation")
revolting (Shakespeare meant "rebellious") [earlier than *OED*]
to reword (Shakespeare meant "re-echo" and "repeat")
ring carrier ("go-between")
ring-time ("time for exchanging rings")
to rival (Shakespeare meant "to compete")
roadway
roguery
rose-cheeked
rose-lipped
rug-headed ("shock-headed")
rumination
ruttish
sacrificial
sanctimonious
to sate
satisfying (as an adjective)
•savage (as "uncivilized")
savagery
schoolboy
scrimer ("a fencer")
scroyle ("wretch")
scrubbed (Shakespeare meant "stunted")
scuffle
seamy ("seamed") *and* seamy side ("under-side of a garment")
to secure (Shakespeare meant "obtain security")
self-abuse (Shakespeare meant "self-deception")
semblative ("resembling")
shipwrecked (Shakespeare spelled it "ship-wrackt")
shooting star
shudder (the noun)
silk stocking
silliness
to sire
skimble-skamble ("senseless")
skim milk [in quartos; "skim'd milk" in the Folio]
slugabed
to sneak
sneap ("snub"—as a noun and as a verb)
soft-hearted
spectacled
spilth ("something spilled")
spleenful
sportive
to squabble
stealthy
stillborn
to subcontract (Shakespeare meant "to remarry")
successful
suffocating (the adjective)
to sully
superscript (Shakespeare meant "address written on a letter")
superserviceable ("more serviceable than is necessary")
to supervise (Shakespeare meant "to peruse")
to swagger
tanling ("somone with a tan")
tardiness
time-honored
title page [earlier than *OED*]
tortive ("twisting")
to torture
traditional (Shakespeare meant "tradition-bound")
tranquil
transcendence
trippingly
unaccommodated
unappeased
to unbosom
unchanging
unclaimed
•uncomfortable (in the sense "disquieting")
to uncurl

hedge-pig
hell-born
to hinge
hint (the noun)
hobnail (the noun)
hodge-pudding ("a pudding of various ingredients")
homely (in the sense of "ugly")
honey-tongued
hornbook ("alphabet tablet")
hostile
hot-blooded
howl (the noun)
to humor
hunchbacked ["bunch-back'd" in earliest edition]
hurly ("commotion")
to hurry
idle-headed
ill-tempered
ill-used
impartial
to impede
implorator ("solicitor")
import (the noun: "importance," "significance")
inaudible
inauspicious
indirection
indistinguishable
inducement
informal (Shakespeare seems to have meant "unformed" or "irresolute")
to inhearse ("load into a hearse")
to inlay
to instate (Shakespeare, who spelled it "enstate," meant "to endow")
inventorially ("in detail")
investment (Shakespeare meant "a piece of clothing")
invitation
invulnerable
jaded (Shakespeare seems to have meant "contemptible")
juiced ("juicy")
keech ("solidified fat")
kickie-wickie (derogatory term for a wife)
kitchen-wench
lackluster
ladybird
lament
land-rat
to lapse
laughable
leaky
leapfrog
lewdster
loggerhead (Shakespeare meant "blockhead")
lonely (Shakespeare meant "lone")
long-legged
love letter
to lower (Shakespeare meant both "to frown, to threaten" and "to sink, to decline")
lustihood
lustrous
madcap (as an adjective)
madwoman [earlier than *OED*]
majestic
malignancy (Shakespeare meant "malign tendency")
manager
marketable
marriage bed
marybud ("bud of a marigold")
mewling ("whining, whimpering")
militarist (Shakespeare meant "soldier")
mimic (the noun)
misgiving (the noun: "uneasiness")
to misquote
mockable ("deserving ridicule")
money's worth ["money-worth" dates from the fourteenth century]
monumental
moonbeam
mortifying (the adjective)
motionless
mountaineer (Shakespeare meant "mountain-dweller")
to muddy
multipotent ("most mighty")
multitudinous
mutineer
nayword ("byword")
neglect (the noun)
to negotiate
never-ending [earlier than *OED*]
newsmonger
nimble-footed
noiseless
nonregardance ("disregard")
nook-shotten ("full of corners or angles")
to numb [earlier than *OED*]
obscene (Shakespeare meant "revolting")
ode
to offcap ("to doff one's cap")
offenseful ("sinful")
offenseless ("unoffending")
Olympian (Shakespeare meant "Olympic")
to operate
oppugnancy ("antagonism")
outbreak
to outcrafty ("to excel in craft"; "outwit")
to outdare
to outfrown
to outgrow
to out-Herod ("to outdo Herod in bluster")
to outscold
to outsell (Shakespeare meant "to exceed in value")
to outstare
to outswear
to outsweeten ("to be sweeter than")
to out-talk
to out-villain
to outweigh
overblown (Shakespeare meant "blown over")
to overbulk ("to surpass in bulk")
overcredulous
overgrowth
to overpay
to overpower
to overrate
to over-red ("to redden over")
to overstink ("to stink more than")
overview (as a noun: Shakespeare meant "supervision")
pageantry

courtship
• to cow (as "to intimidate")
to crank (Shakespeare meant "to reel about"—"to come cranking in" is his coinage)
critical
cross-gartered
cruelhearted
to cudgel
Dalmatian [earlier than *OED*]
to dapple
dauntless
dawn (the noun)
day's work
death's-head
defeat (the noun)
to denote
depositary ("trustee")
to deracinate
dewdrop
dexterously (Shakespeare spelled it "dexteriously")
to discandy ("melt")
disgraceful (Shakespeare meant "unbecoming")
to dishearten
to dislocate
distasteful (Shakespeare meant "showing disgust")
distracted (Shakespeare meant "crazed")
distrustful
dog-weary
doit (a Dutch coin: "a pittance") [earlier than *OED*]
domineering
downstairs
drollery
droplet
dry-nurse
duteous
to dwindle
East Indies
to educate
to elbow
embrace (the noun)
employer
employment
to enclog ("to hinder")
enfranchisement (Shakespeare didn't have voting rights in mind)
engagement [earlier than *OED*]
to enmesh
enrapt
to ensnare
to enthrone
epileptic
equivocal
eventful
excitement (Shakespeare meant "incitement")
expedience
expertness
exposure
exsufflicate ("puffed up")
eyeball
eyebeam
eyedrop (Shakespeare meant "tear")
eyewink
fair-faced
fairyland
fanged
fantastico ("someone prone to fantasies")
fap ("intoxicated")
farmhouse
far-off
fashionable
fashionmonger [earlier than *OED*]
fathomless (Shakespeare meant "too huge to be encircled by one's arms")
fat-witted
featureless (Shakespeare meant "ugly")
fiendlike
to film (Shakespeare meant "to film over")
to fishify ("turn into fish")

fitful
fixture (Shakespeare meant "fixing" or "setting firmly in place")
flapdragon (a raisin soaked in brandy and set aflame)
fleer (as a noun: "sneer")
fleshment ("the excitement of a first success")
flirt-gill (a "floozy")
• flowery (as we use it to mean "full of florid expressions")
fly-bitten
footfall
foot landraker ("footpad")
foppish
foregone
fortune-teller
to forward ("to advance")
foster-nurse
foul-mouthed
fount
Franciscan
freezing (as an adjective)
fretful
frugal
fubbed off ("fobbed off")
full-grown [earlier than *OED*]
fullhearted
futurity
gallantry (Shakespeare meant "gallant people")
garden house
generous (Shakespeare meant "gentle," "noble," "fair")
gentlefolk
glow (as a noun)
to glutton
to gnarl
go-between
to gossip (Shakespeare meant "to make oneself at home like a gossip—that is, a kindred spirit or fast friend")
grass plot
gravel-blind ("almost stone-blind")
gray-eyed
green-eyed
grief-shot ("sorrow-stricken")
grime (as a noun)
to grovel
• gust (as "a wind-blast")
half-blooded
to hand (Shakespeare meant "to handle")
to happy ("to gladden")
heartsore

# "Household Words":

## COMMON AND UNCOMMON WORDS
## COINED BY SHAKESPEARE

**POLONIUS:** What do you read, my lord?
**HAMLET:** Words, words, words.

HAMLET Act 2, scene 2, 191–192

It is always impossible to know who first coined a word—and not much easier to know who first wrote it down. But here's a partial list of the words for which Shakespeare is the first authority the *Oxford English Dictionary* could find. Some words predate the first citation in the *OED*, even in its second edition. In a few cases, Shakespeare was the first to have used the word in at least one of its modern senses; these words are marked with a bullet (°). All verbs are in the infinitive form—that is, the "to" form ("to belly," "to overstink," etc.). Where there might otherwise be confusion over the part of speech, it is spelled out.

abstemious
Academe
accessible
accommodation (a variation of "accommodations")
addiction (Shakespeare meant "tendency")
admirable [earlier than OED]
aerial (Shakespeare meant "of the air")
airless
amazement
anchovy
arch-villain
to arouse
assassination
auspicious
bachelorship ("bachelorhood")
to barber
barefaced
baseless
basta! (first use in English)
batty (Shakespeare meant "bat-like")

beachy ("beach-covered")
to bedabble
to bedazzle
bedroom (Shakespeare meant "room in bed")
to behowl
to belly ("to swell")
belongings
to bemad
to bemonster
to besmirch
to bet
to bethump
to bewhore
birthplace
black-faced
to blanket
bloodstained
bloodsucking
blusterer
bodikins ("little bodies")
boggler ("slow-poke"; "stickler")
bold-faced
bottled (Shakespeare meant "bottle-shaped")
braggartism
brisky
broomstaff ("broom-handle")
budger ("one who budges")
bullyrook ("pal")
bum-bailie (term of contempt for a bailiff)
bump (as a noun)

buzzer (Shakespeare meant "tattle-tale")
to cake
candle holder
to canopy
to castigate
•to cater (as "to purvey food")
catlike
to champion
to channel (Shakespeare meant "to form a channel")
characterless
•cheap (in the pejorative sense: "flimsy," "vulgar")
cheese-paring
chimney-top
choppy (Shakespeare meant "chapped")
churchlike
circumstantial
clodpoll ("blockhead")
cloyment
clyster pipe ("enema tube")
cold-blooded
coldhearted
compact (the noun: "agreement")
to comply
to compromise (Shakespeare meant "to agree")
consanguineous
control (the noun)
coppernose ("a kind of acne")
countless

## EXPRESSIONS

1. prithee
2. 'swounds, 'sblood
3. withal
4. anon
5. anent
6. betimes
7. fie
8. marry
9. Anglo-Saxon prefixes: a, be
10. exit, exeunt

## TRAGEDY TERMS

1. epiphany
2. catastrophe
3. tragic hero
4. tragic flaw

# Hamlet Vocabulary

## ACT I

1. apparition
2. martial
3. to bode
4. emulate
5. mettle
6. portentous, portent, portend
7. malicious
8. beseech, importune, entreat
9. kin
10. sullied
11. frailty
12. countenance (noun and verb)
13. calumny
14. purge
15. pernicious
16. antic, lunacy, ecstasy

## ACT II

1. "my liege"
2. affliction
3. glean
4. brevity
5. vile
6. arras
7. mirth
8. apprehension
9. paragon
10. rogue
11. conciet
12. offal
13. bawdy
14. treacherous
15. lecherous
16. vengeance
17. malefactions
18. blench
19. melancholy

## ACT III

1. bestow, stow
2. visage
3. pious
4. consumation
5. contumely
6. insolence
7. spurns
8. quietus
9. bodkin
10. fardels
11. bourn
12. distempered
13. choler
14. scourge

## ACTS IV & V

1. Providence
2. divinity
3. incensed
4. unbated
5. envenomed
6. base
7. palpable

The man is named Laertes. Laertes is Ophelia's brother.

"Where are you going?" asks, Laertes.

"I am going to find Uncle Claudius," says Hamlet.
Hamlet also insults Ophelia, who is now dead.

See Hamlet and Laertes duel.

See Hamlet stab Laertes.

See Hamlet's mother drink poison...
Oh, oh! I don't think you were supposed to do that!

See Hamlet stab King Claudius.

Hamlet is usually very confused.
Now, Hamlet looks very serious.

Don't drink that poison, Hamlet—oops, too late!

See everybody wounded and bleeding and dying and dead?

What fun they are having!

Wouldn't you like to play like that?

The End.

But Hamlet's mother is not cross with him.

She loves Hamlet. She thinks that he is a good boy.

And Hamlet loves his mother.
She is a good mother.

Hamlet loves his mother very much.

Hamlet loves his mother *very*, *very* much.

Does Hamlet love his mother a little too much?

Perhaps!

See Hamlet run. Run, Hamlet—run.

Where are you going, Hamlet?

"I am going to find Uncle Claudius," says Hamlet.

On the way he passes a brook.
In the brook he sees Ophelia. Ophelia is drowning.

"Where are you going?" asks Ophelia.

"I am going to find Uncle Claudius."

"Glub, glub," says Ophelia.

On the way he meets a man.

He is going to his mother's room.

"I have something to tell you, mother," says Hamlet. "Uncle Claudius
is bad. He gave my father poison. Poison is not good for you.
I do not like poison! Do you like poison?"

"Oh, no, indeed!" says his mother.
"I do not like poison."

"Oh, there is Uncle Claudius–now," says Hamlet.
"He is hiding behind the curtain. Why is he hiding behind the
curtain? I shall stab him. Yes, what fun it will be to stab him
through the curtain."

See Hamlet draw his sword. See Hamlet stab.
Stab, Hamlet—stab!

See Uncle Claudius fall. How funny he looks stabbed.
Ha, ha, ha!

Oh, oh! It is not Uncle Claudius.

It is Polonius.

Polnius is Ophelia's father.

What fun Hamlet is having.

"You are naughty, Hamlet," says Hamlet's mother.

"You have stabbed Polonius."

"Oh, no," says Hamlet. "I would not like poison."

"Will you avenge me, Hamlet?" asks the ghost.

"Oh, yes," says Hamlet. "I will avenge you.
What fun it will be to avenge you."
On the way he meets a girl.

"Where are you going?" asks the girl.

"I am going to the castle," says Hamlet.

"Ha, Ha," says the girl.

"What is your name?" says Hamlet.

"My name is Ophelia," says the girl.

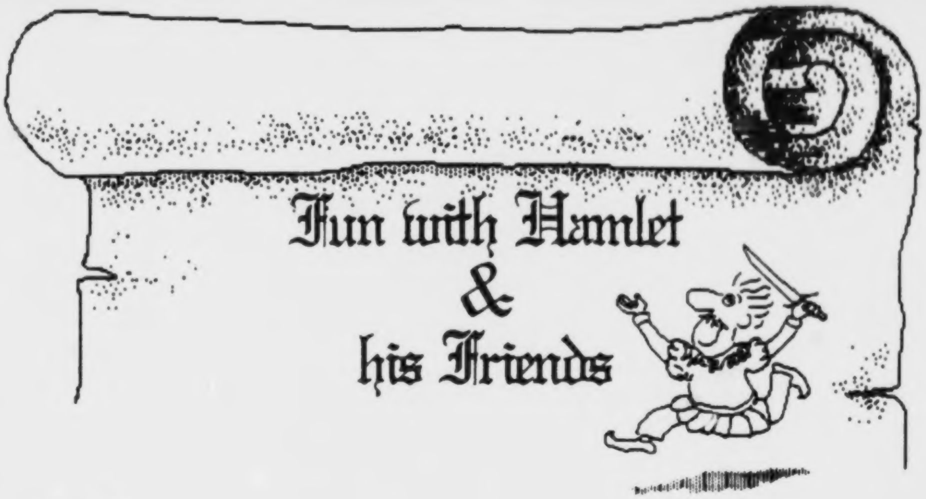
"Why are you laughing?" asks Hamlet. "You are a silly goose."

"I laugh because you are so funny," says Ophelia. "I laugh because you are a manic-depressive! Are you not manic-depressive?"

"I am not a manic-depressive," says Hamlet, laughing and clapping his hands. "I pretend to be, for I want to fool my uncle, Claudius. What fun it is to pretend I am manic-depressive!"

See Hamlet run.

Run, Hamlet—run.



# Fun with Hamlet & his Friends

See the man?

What a funny man!

His name is Hamlet. He is a prince.

He is sad. Why are you sad, Hamlet?

“I am sad because my father has died,” says Hamlet.
“My father was the king.”

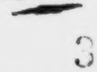
Where are you going, Hamlet?

“I am going to the castle,” says Hamlet.

“Boo, boo,” says the ghost!

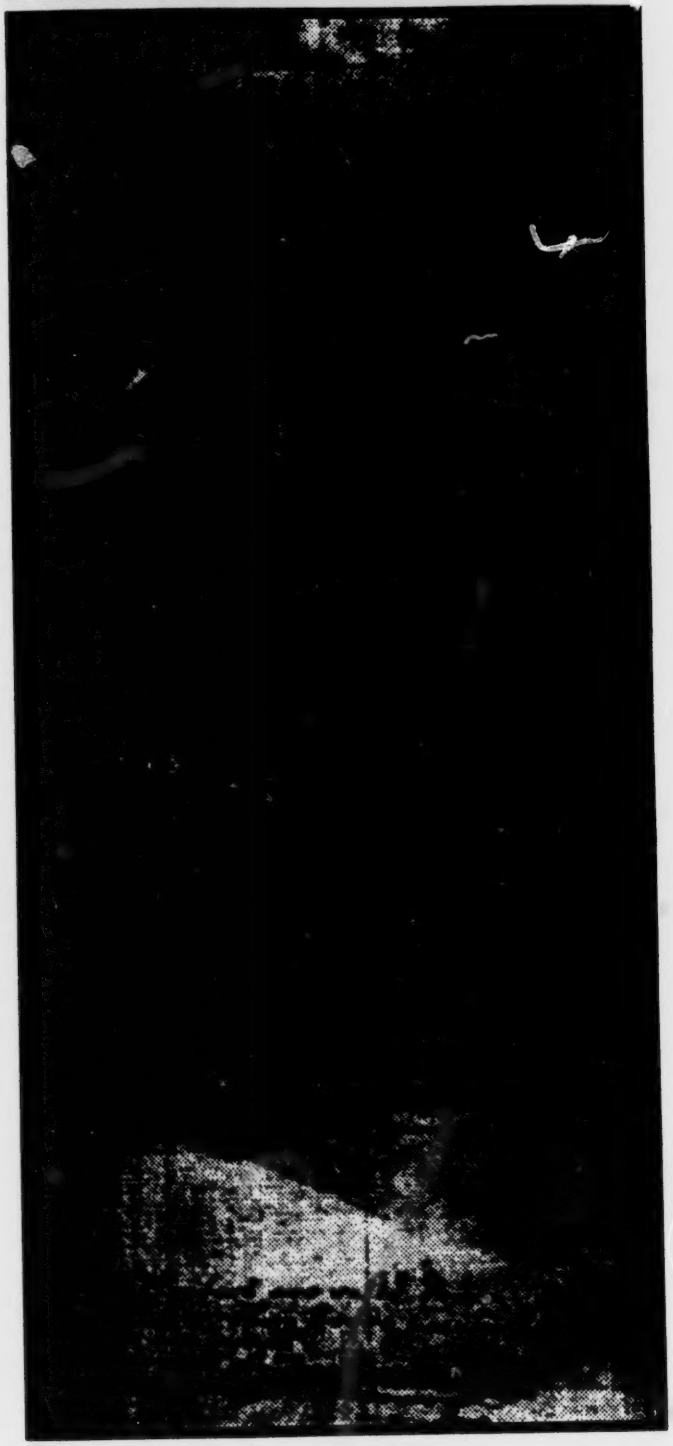
“What is your name, you silly ghost?” asks Hamlet,
clapping his hands—

“I am your father,” says the ghost.
“I was a good king. Uncle Claudius is a bad king.
He gave me poison. Would you like poison?”



# Master Works Institute

# Fun With Hamlet and His Friends



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in general principles, but fails in the particular application. While he depends on his memory, and can draw from a seemingly vast repository of knowledge, he then seems subject to the sudden dereliction of his faculties, loses the order of his ideas, and becomes entangled in his own thoughts—then recovers, only to repeat the cycle again. All of the various phenomena surrounding the character of Pelonius may be explained in the concept of dotage encroaching upon wisdom.

The gentle and affectionate character of Ophelia is drawn in and sucked down by the whirlpool of tragic events which surround her. Hamlet treats her very harshly. This seems to stem not only from his aberration of intellect, but also from his suspicion that she is acting treacherously towards him, and is an instrument in the hands of the King and her father for some unworthy (?) purpose.

Ophelia is so modest in her sanity that she never even confesses her love for Hamlet. We only gather that she loves him from her actions, and from the snatches of obscene songs that she later sings while insane. Ophelia presents to us an often common disposition displayed in madness where words and actions may occur very opposite to that which might be possessed in a sane state. In this occurrence, the timid become bold, the tender become cruel, and as in Ophelia's affliction, the warmly passionate and modest become coarse and lewd—the complete reversal of what had been her natural character.

The question of whether on not the Queen was an accessory to the murder of her husband, as Hamlet supposes, should be seriously examined. She appears to show genuine surprise when Hamlet exclaims the term "As kill a King" in her chamber. In addition, she shows no degree of uneasiness or remorse at the play, as does the King, and no discussion between Gertrude and the King ever ensues in regards to that subject. It may be assumed that her true anguish, in relation to Hamlet's comparison of her two husbands and his severe censure of her, comes from her recollection of her adulterous relationship with Claudius during the life of the late King and her present hasty and incestuous marriage. That, and fact that she, as do most of the other characters, does not ultimately discover Claudius' evil intents until the final scene brings emotional power to Hamlet's long-awaited revenge at the end of the play.

In all, *Hamlet* is a play that may be viewed by students in a variety of dimensions. Shakespeare, in his skillful dramatic design, includes directions to both the actors and the audience at times in the play that provide a lesson toward the consideration of what should be admired, what should be condemned, and in what light to regard the actors in the play. Because so much of the intent and interpretation of the play is subject to the evaluation of arguably unclear assumptions, student participation in the evaluation of alternate views may help to provide a richer and more varied educational experience for everyone.

mates all of his dark planning. However, this final revenge deserves little admiration when he is thrust into the position of taking final action, or losing his opportunity forever. So, he seeing his own mother drink the poison and die, and his own life destroyed by the continual treachery that took his father's life, he rushes and stabs the King with the treated sword, and swallows what he knows to be the poisoned contents of the goblet.

Hamlet's actions certainly border on the criminal both in intent and effect. Although the Prince may have killed Pelonius through an erroneous identification of the shadow behind the curtain, there are other questions related to this bedroom scene that do not appear to have simple answers. The first concept to consider is the appropriateness of his presence and the direction of the conversation in the room at that time of Pelonius' death. Even more directly criminal is his deliberately procuring the execution of his two schoolmates who, it appears, were completely unaware of the treacherous nature of the mandate that they were employed to carry.

Hamlet's conduct to Ophelia is difficult to justify. Although there are hints, particularly in her songs in the later part of the play, that there had been more to the relationship than presented, his actions and treatment of her should be considered responsible for Ophelia's loss of reason and ultimately, her life. And she cannot rest even in death—for, Hamlet even interrupts her funeral, and insults her brother by boasting of an affection for Ophelia which he had denied to her face in life. At the end, Hamlet kills the King at last to revenge, it may be considered, himself and not his father.

As a major character in a literary work, Hamlet's conduct is indefensible. The only justification for his actions can come from the recognition that he was a man whose mind was overthrown by the peculiarity of the circumstances in which he was placed.

Was Hamlet's madness real or feigned? Probably both. Although he never seemed to succumb to complete loss of control, he did rage on at times, confusing the reality of purpose in his approach to the responsibilities of his life. This may have been responsible for his inability take proper action when it would have been most appropriate to do so. Hamlet seems well aware of these confusions and afflictions, though, and takes great care to exaggerate his mental state at the proper time for a most effective response.

Hamlet appears quite confident in his control of his own mind, which may lead to the assumption that he may have been more in control than Shakespeare intended the audience to perceive. He never admits to his loss of mental function, and his soliloquies reflect a somber and intellectual factor that is not present in his complex life. Even when his mother questions his mental state, in reply he says, "not in madness, but mad in craft." Yet, Hamlet appears, on occasion, to hover on the edge of illness. It is accepted that he is more cunning than wise—a quality not infrequently found in those suffering from at least a partial mental alienation.

Hamlet has no reason to assume insanity to his friend, Horatio—whom he has trusted with this secret, and whom he tells that he might think fit to "put an antic disposition on." Then, in the middle of a serious discourse in the churchyard, he suddenly breaks off from his subject and abruptly asks, "Is not parchment made of sheep-skins?" This does not support the contention that presents the concept that Hamlet's illness is feigned, and his mind is soundly in control.

Hamlet's most despicable attribute appears in his useless and wanton cruelty directed towards Ophelia. This assumed madness never seems to assist, in any way, in working out his revenge. On the contrary, it very nearly succeeds in preventing its execution. Hamlet's feigned madness very well could have brought on his own confinement and even execution had events turned another way.

Hamlet's conduct to Pelonius is also most unjustified. Although it may be assumed that he disliked the old courtier because he was counsellor and companion to the King, there is no treachery in the old man. Pelonius is always presented as very just and open. When he discovers Hamlet's love for his daughter, he lays no plot to induce him to marry her, but discountenances the attachment, and informs the King and Queen of it. He may appear foolishly talkative, but he is still a very shrewd man—and, in spite of the fact that his wisdom is presented as fast falling into the weakness and childishness of age, he proves to be a very acute observer. He seems to excel

In studying *Hamlet* effectively, the instructor should provide sufficient information and time for individual analysis of the work based upon a common understanding of the intents and actions of the characters. Remind students that, as with much of Shakespeare's work, *the deeper you go–the more there is to know*. This information should be provided prior to reading the play. If the students understand the basic story concept and look for a rich flow of dialogue rather than focusing unnecessarily upon the terminology of the period, this study can provide an organized structure of thought for a self-questioning of the material presented for discussion.

In addition, it should be stressed that the students' opinions are extremely valuable. There is much in both Hamlet's and Ophelia's parts in the play that do not clearly define that line between reality and illusion. And both present and prior actions of other characters, particularly Gertrude and the King, should also deeply influence those opinions. The concept of forethought and action should be specifically addressed in relation to the student's lives, and more particularly as it relates to a comparison of other works by the author.

Finally, this information is not provided in place of reading the work. It must be stressed that no intellectually critical evaluation can ever take place without a careful and attentive reading of the play. To do otherwise not only cheats the individual student from active participation in the unit, but it also unfairly lowers the intellectual level of the analysis for all of the students in the class. This can only be a *student-centered* activity when the student elects to take an active role in the educational process.

William Shakespeare, as was common in English theatre at the time, borrowed many of the story concepts from earlier existing works, including mythology, history, novels, older plays, and other sources. *Hamlet* is a powerful tragedy that has for centuries focused the attention and commentary of critics and educators alike probably more than any other work by the author. It is supposed that the idea for *Hamlet* may be found in Saxo Grammaticus, the Danish Historian. Adapted by Belleforest, and contained in the seven volume collection of novels entitled *Histoires Tragique*, this almost naively simple and absurdly violent narrative was later translated into English with the title of *The Historie of Hamblet*. And, although the concept and some of the major movements in the story may have been suggested to Shakespeare through this work, his sophisticated writing shows little true indebtedness to it.

The character of Hamlet is not what we might expect from a major character in a play. The power of the play comes in the presentation of a multiple theme more than the development of an individually strong character portrait. His chief difficulty stems from a pronounced irresolution. Though some evaluations of his character present an image of a sensitive victim of disillusioned circumstance, a more persuasive argument can be made for the concept that presents Hamlet as an uncertain procrastinator. He admits that everything that he does is "sicklied o'r" with doubt and uncertainty. His constant deep and dark meditations dwell upon the mysteries of life and death. He is a profound sceptic who progressively loses his faith in nature, and in doing so loses much of his love of it.

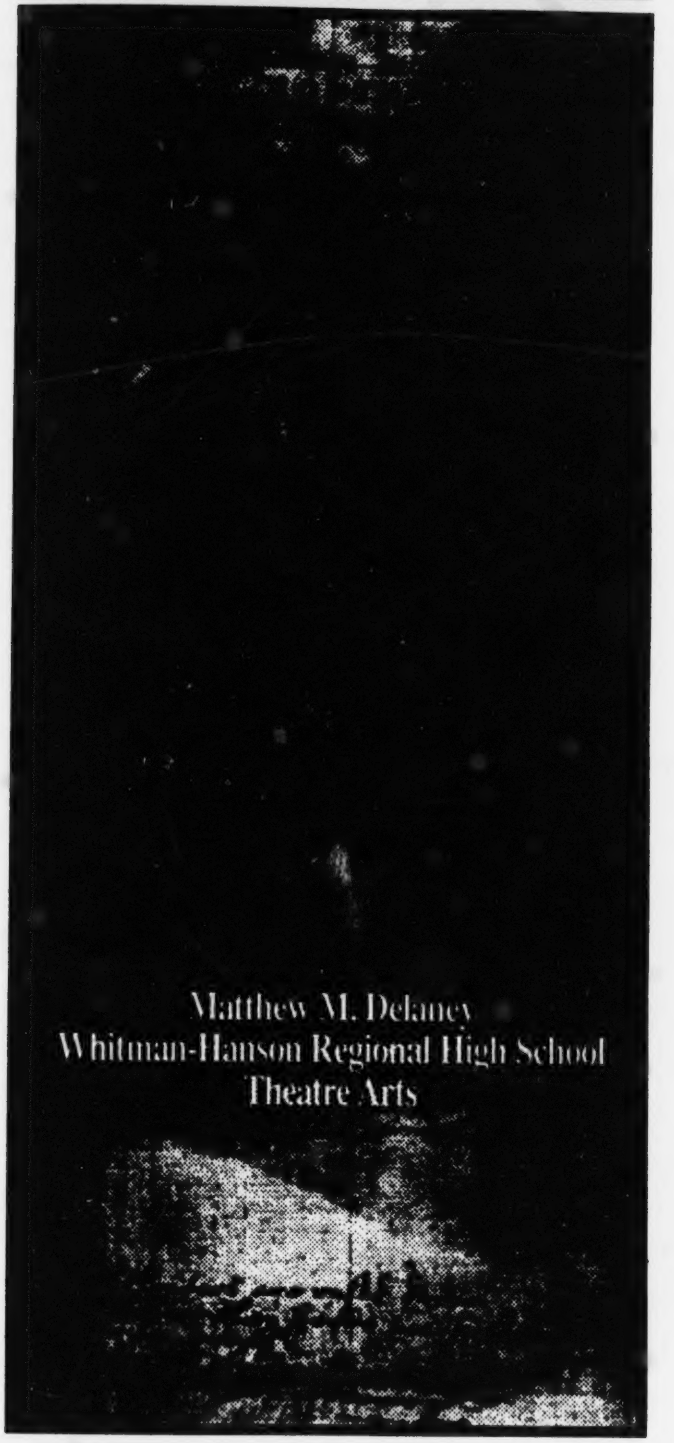
A comparison with Shakespeare's Richard the Third clearly displays the extent of his inability to take action. This example amply illustrates that while Richard is all action, Hamlet, on the other hand, is all thought. While of Richard it is said, "actions but thoughts by him are half performed," Hamlet muses darkly and spins deeper into his inactivity until outward circumstances finally require that he perform an adaptation of his plan within a very short time frame.

If we look at the traditional definition of the hero, Hamlet does not fit the mold. His weakness and indecision in taking action to confront his moral dilemma provide a scenario where he is truly baffled in proposing a solution to the havoc wreaked by the hand of destiny. Each time he intellectualizes a course of action, he finds an excuse for not pursuing that course. When he resolves that suicide is the answer for him, he logically reasons himself out of it. In dedicating his life to the revenge of what he perceives as his father's murder, he again reasons that he cannot take action without proof; and upon receiving the evidence that he needs from the ghost—doubts, deliberates and finally, does nothing.

He eventually takes a hasty course of action in the in the final moments of the play that consum-

# Master Works Institute

## Hamlet Curriculum/Unit Introduction



Matthew M. Delaney
Whitman-Hanson Regional High School
Theatre Arts

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G. Assign paragraph responses to the following:
  1. Opinion paragraph on Hamlet's behavior in Act I and Act II.
    a. substitution of verbal killing for actual killing
    b. as an attempt to harden himself for what he has to do
  2. Opinion as to whether Gertrude is guilty (?) of anything
  3. Hamlet as fulfilling the qualities of a tragic hero
  4. Opinion of other influenctial character(s) in play
  5. Application of one of the elements of *The Spanish Tragedy* to the play
  6. Influence of the disruption of the chain of being on the play

H. Assign composition responses to one of the themes of the play as mentioned in Suggested Activities

I. Assign the "To be or not to Be" soliloquy to be memorized and written: discuss

J. administer a vocabulary test based on words taken from context

## TEXT/VERSION

Text: Shakespeare, William. *Hamlet*. New York: Signet, 1987

## EVALUATION

A. Administer an exam which covers all introductory material and Act I scene 1
   1. biography of Shakespeare
   2. influences on Shakespeare
   3. Elizabethan Theatre
   4. Renaissance beliefs
   5. Shakespeare's influence on vocabulary
   6. elements of *The Spanish Tragedy*
   7. purpose of Act I, scene 1
   8. Horatio's purposes

B. Administer an exam which covers certain elements of Greek tragedy
   1. definition of tragedy
   2. tragic hero
   3. tragic flaw
   4. epiphany
   5. catastrophe
   6. catharsis

C. Administer an exam which covers Acts I and II
   1. themes
   2. character
   3. meaning of incidents
   4. significance of certain quotes
   5. soliloquies
   6. presence of elements of The Spanish Tragedy
   7. influenceof Renaissance beliefs

D. Administer an exam which covers Act III
   1. themes
   2. character
   3. meanings of incidents
   4. significance of certain quotes
   5. turning point of play

E. Administer an exam which covers Acts IV and V
   1. themes
   2. characters
   3. meaning of incidents
   4. significance of certain quotes
   5. catastrophe of play
   6. effectiveness of character types within the play
   7. plan *vs* action in the play

F. Administer reading checks as noted in Suggested Activities

X. Read and discuss Act IV, scenes 1 through 5 focusing on:
1. Hamlet's attitude change toward
   a. Claudius
   b. going to England
   c. Fortinbras
2. Ophelia's insanity
   a. father's death
   b. guilt concerning Hamlet
   c. influence of Code of Renaissance woman
3. Laertes
   a. inherited wrong
   b. all action, no thought

Y. Read and discuss Act IV, scenes 6 & 7 focusing on:
1. letters from Hamlet
2. dark plottings of Claudius and Laertes
   a. duel
   b. flawed plan
3. Ophelia's suicide

Z. Conduct discussion of Hamlet built up as a tragic hero
1. compare Hamlet and Ophelia
2. compare Hamlet and Laertes
3. Horatio's feelings
   a. "What a king is this"
   b. attempted suicide at end of play
4. Fortinbras' belief tht Hamlet "would have proved most royal"

Aa. Read and discuss Act IV, scene 1 focusing on :
1. purpose of scene
2. gravediggers
3. "alas poor Yorick"
4. feeding imagery
5. Ophelia's funeral
   a. Laertes' behavior
   b. Hamlet's behavior

Ab. Read and discuss Act IV, scene 2 focusing on :
1. "There's a divinity that shapes our end, Rough-hew them how we will."
2. the deaths of Rosencrantz and Guidenstern
   a. change in Hamlet's attitude
   b. theme concerning the "baser natures" coming between "mighty opposites."
3. the theme of "The readiness is all."
4. Osric's purpose
5. "There's a special providence in the fall of a sparrow."

Ac. Analyze the catastrophe of the play focusing on:
1. The flaws of the main character

4. reaction of Claudius to nunnery scene
   a. reasons for sending Hamlet to England
   b. "Madness in great ones must not unwatched go."

S. Administer reading check on soliloquy and nunnery scene

T. Read and discuss Act III, scene 2 focusing on:
   1. Hamlet's possible insanity
      a. attitude toward Ophelia
      b. attitude toward Polonius
      c. attitude during play
   2. Gertrude's reaction to the play
   3. Claudius' reaction to play
      a. loss of balance
      b. guilt
   4. Hamlet's reaction
      a. mania
      b. analogy of recorder
      c. treatment of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern
      d. treatment of Polonius
   5. Hamlet's soliloquy
      a. "...now could I drink hot blood."
      b. fear and harming mother

U. Read and discuss Act III, scene 4 focusing on:
   1. Claudius' soliloquy
      a. confession
      b. inability to repent
   2. Hamlet's failure to kill Claudius
      a. need to send Claudius to Hell
      b. irony

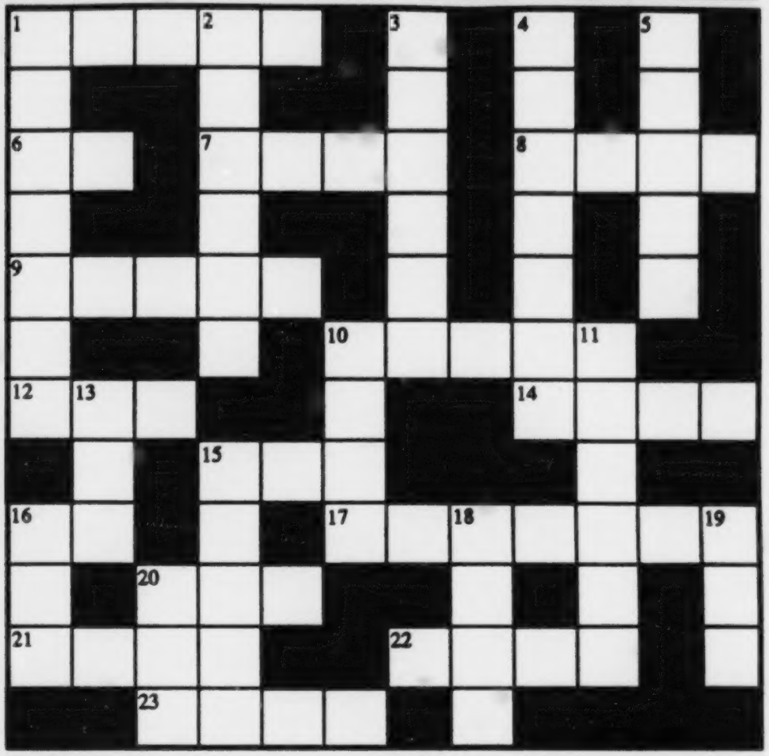
V. Read and discuss Act III, scene 4 focusing on:
   1. reappearance of ghost
   2. behavior toward mother
   3. turning point of play
      a. kills for first time
      b. reunites with mother
      c. resolves of tragic flaw
         1. epiphany
         2. scourge
   4. belief in fate
      a. end of manic depressive moods
      b. man of action not thought
   5. "I must be cruel only to be kind."

W. Assign essay concerning how and what we may know about Hamlet's mother

to undervalue (Shakespeare meant "to judge as of lesser value")
to undress
unearthly
uneducated
to unfool
unfrequented
ungoverned
ungrown
to unhand (as in the phrase "unhand me!")
to unhappy
unhelpful
unhidden
unlicensed
unmitigated
unmusical
to unmuzzle
unpolluted
unpremeditated
unpublished (Shakespeare meant "undisclosed")
unquestionable (Shakespeare meant "impatient")
unquestioned
unreal
unrivaled
unscarred
unscratched
to unsex
unsolicited
unsullied
unswayed (Shakespeare meant "unused" and "ungoverned")
untutored
unvarnished
• unwillingness (in the sense "reluctance")
upstairs
useful
useless
valueless
varied (as an adjective)
varletry
vasty
vulnerable
watchdog
water drop
water fly
well-behaved
well-bred
well-educated
well-read
to widen (Shakespeare meant "to open wide")
wittolly ("contentedly a cuckold")
worn out (Shakespeare meant "dearly departed")
wry-necked ("crook-necked")
yelping (as an adjective)
zany (a clown's sidekick or a mocking mimic)

# CROSSWORD PUZZLE

## HAMLET



### Across

1 With mirth in funeral and with...in marraige(5)
6 There was...such stuff in my thoughts (2)
7 I am native here, and to the manner... (4)
8 To thine own self be... (4)
9 I shall not look upon his like... (5)
10 To sleep, perchance to ... (5)
12 A little more than..., and less than kind (3)
14 The bird of dawning singeth all night... (4)
15 ...thee to a nunnery (3)
16 What's Hecuba to him, or...to Hecuba? (2)
17 There are more things in heaven and earth,... (7)
20 O! that this too...solid flesh would melt (3)
22 Brevity is the ...of wit (4)
23 Lord Hamlet is a prince, out of thy... (4)

### Down

1 Something is rotten in the state of...(7)
2 Be thou a spirit of health or...damned (6)
3 Neither a borrower nor a...be (6)
4 The thousand...shocks that flesh is heir to (7)
5 I must be...,only to be kind (5)
10 Conscience...make cowards of us all (4)
11 When we have shuffled off this...coil (6)
13 Be thou as chaste as..., as pure snow (3)
15 It is an honest..., that let me tell you (5)
16 No...upon his head, his stockings fouled (3)
18 This majestical...fretted with golden fire (4)
19 For the apparel...proclaims the man (3)
20 That he is mad,...true (3)

Short Answer Test Hamlet 1.43 points each

I. Mark each statement as true (a) or false (b).

1. Hamlet's romance with Ophelia is ended by his mother.
2. Gertrude is astonished to see the ghost.
3. Yorick had been the court jester.
4. Claudius never admits his guilt to the audience.
5. Claudius killed the king by pouring poison in his ear
6. At the end of the play, Horatio becomes king.
7. "To thine own self be true" is a line from Hamlet's soliloquy.
8. Polonius believes that love for Ophelia caused Hamlet's madness.
9. In the "To be or not to be" soliloquy, Hamlet discusses suicide.
10. Claudius deeply loves Gertrude.
11. When Hamlet stabs through the curtain in his mother's room, Hamlet believes he has stabbed Claudius

II. Choose the word or phrase that best completes each statement.

12. Fortinbras is prince of (a) Norway (b) Denmark (c) Poland
13. "Get thee to a nunnery" is said to (a) Gertrude (b) Hamlet (c) Ophelia
14. Fishmonger is the word Hamlet uses for (a) Claudius (b) Rosencrantz & Guildenstern (c) Polonius
15. Hamlet does not kill Claudius at prayer because (a) the queen is there (b) Claudius is well guarded (c) Hamlet wants to damn the king's soul.
16. Hamlet calls his uncle (a) rank (b) garbage (c) gross
17. Hamlet hopes the play will (a) win Ophelia back (b) cause Claudius to reveal his guilt (c) amuse Horatio
18. The ghost tells Hamlet (a) to leave his mother alone (b) that Polonius was involved in his murder. (c) that he can trust Horatio
19. Claudius hopes that Hamlet will be killed in (a) Norway (b) England (c) the graveyard
20. The graveyard shows (a) that all are equal in death (b) that Hamlet killed Polonius (c) that Ophelia had a large funeral
21. Ophelia dies by (a) hanging (b) poison (c) drowning
22. Comic relief is provided by (a) Laertes (b) the gravediggers (c) the players
23. The duel is plotted by Laertes and (a) Claudius (b) Horatio (c) Fortinbras
24. Claudius doesn't redeem himself because he dies (a) drunk (b) lying (c) trying to kill Laertes
25. Hamlet wants Horatio to stay alive to (a) be king (b) go to England (c) tell the story

III Matching- Match the character to the description

26. Polonius
27. the ghost
28. Hamlet
29. Gertrude
30. Ophelia
31. Laertes
32. Horatio
33. Gonzago

a. who Hamlet calls "frail"
b. returns Hamlet's gifts
c. asks Hamlet if Hamlet loves him
d. feels "the readiness is all"
e. part of the play within a play
ab. advisor to the king
ac. believable
ad. brother to Ophelia

IV Matching - Match the item with the proper description

34. Yorick
35. letters
36. poisoned wine
37. mouse trap
38. rapier
39. armor
40. flowers

a. kills Gertrude
b. skull in graveyard
c. nickname for Hamlet's play
d. part of Ophelia's insanity
e. delivered by R & G
ab. identifies the ghost
ac. kills Laertes

V Select the letter of the choice that best answers the question.

41. The rising action begins with
    a. the ghost's first appearance
    b. the duel between Laertes and Hamlet
    c. Hamlet's "To be or not to be" soliloquy
    d. the arrival of the players

42. Hamlet has to test Claudius' guilt because
    a. he has no reason to suspect Claudius
    b. the ghost commands him to do so.
    c. he does not know whether to trust the ghost.
    d. Claudius suspects him.

43. Hamlet establishes Claudius's guilt by means of
    a. the ghost's appearance
    b. the play within a play
    c. Claudius' fear of Hamlet
    d. Claudius' inability to pray

44. Hamlet's antic remarks are
    a. full of subtle meanings
    b. without any sense
    c. ordinary conversation
    d. understood by everyone.

45. The destruction of the court is brought about by
a. the scheming of Fortinbras
b. Polonius' incompetence
c. Horatio's interference
d. internal decay and corruption.

46. Choose the best re-phrasing of the following statement.
"O...that the Everlasting had not fixed h
his canon 'gainst self-slaughter! O God! God!
How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable
Seem to me all the uses if this world!"
a. Heaven has made the world the way it is-what can man do?
b. The world is so evil that God himself must hate it.
c. If only God's law allowed suicide-How I hate the world.

47. Choose the best re-phrasing of the following statement.
"Thus conscience does make cowards of us all:
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought.
a. Great plans are often left undone because we think about them too much.
b. Should man tolerate life's problems silently or should he take action against them?
c. Actions speak louder than words.

48. In Hamlet's epiphany Hamlet realizes all of the following except
a. he is a scourge
b. he must go to England
c. he is fated.
d. he must act like a prince.

49. Shakespeare build up Hamlet as a tragic hero by proving he is all of the following except
a. more moral
b. smarter
c. stronger
d. royal

50. In the graveyard, all of the following occur except
a. Hamlet jumps into a grave.
b. Hamlet fights with Laertes
c. Hamlet talks to a skull
d. Hamlet communicates with Ophelia

Identify the speakers of the following quotes. Mark your scantron with the appropriate letter.

a. Hamlet
b. Claudius
c. Gertrude
d. Polonius
e. Horatio
ab. Ophelia
ac. the ghost
ad. Laertes

51. "Alas, poor Yorick, I knew him Horatio"
52."...Goodnight, Sweet Prince,/and flights of angels sing thee to thy rest."
53. "Though this be madness, yet there is method in't."
54. "The lady doth protest too much, methinks."
55. "Frailty thy name is woman."
56. "The time is out of joint-O cursed spite,/that ever I was born to set it right."
57. "My words fly up, my thoughts remain below,/Words without thoughts never to heaven go."
58."...The play's the thing,/Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king."
59. "Thus conscience does make cowards of us all."
60. "To sleep, perchance to dream."
61. "This visit is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose."
62. "Absent thee from felicity a while,/...To tell my story."
63. "What a noble mind is here o'erthrown."
64. "...The king, the king's to blame."
65. "Madness in great ones must not unwatched go."
66."There's a divinity that shapes our ends,/Rough-hew them how we will."
67. "If thou didst ever thy dear father love..."
68. "To thine own self be true."
69."Leave her to heaven..."
70."What a piece of work is man."

Hamlet Test Acts III - V

(Each question is worth 5 points)

1. What does Hamlet realize in his epiphany?
2. When Hamlet is reunited with his mother, what does he make her see? How does he apply that knowledge to himself?
3. Why does Hamlet fail to kill Claudius right after the play within the play?
4. What is all the irony surrounding that scene?
5. Give 2 reasons why the ghost reappears.
6. For what 2 reasons has Ophelia gone insane?
7. What is the purpose of Act V, scene 1?
8. Of what is Hamlet made aware when he looks at Yorick's skull?
9. What is the meaning of "There's a divinity that shapes our ends
   Rough-hew them how we will." ?
10. What is the meaning of "The readiness is all." ?
11. Why does Gertrude lie about Ophelia's death?

(Each question is worth 10 points

11. Compare Hamlet and Ophelia.
12. Compare Hamlet, Fortinbras and Laertes.

(25 points)

13. In the catastrophe of the play, what are the major characters' flaws, how do these flaws cause the characters' downfall, and how do the characters redeem themselves?

# HAMLET TEST -Senior College
## ACTS I & II

(5 POINTS EACH)

1. What is the purpose of the opening scene?
2. Who is invading Denmark and why is he picking now to do so?
3. What are Horatio's two purposes?
4. What are Hamlet's two moods and what is he like when they are influencing him?
5. What are the ghost's orders concerning Hamlet's mother?
6. What is Hamlet's conflict and resulting tragic flaw?
7. Explain the way in which Polonius is wrong about Ophelia and Hamlet.
8. Explain the way in which Laertes is wrong about Hamlet and Ophelia.
9. Give 2 proofs that Hamlet probably overheard Polonius and Claudius plotting against him.
10. Give the meaning of the feeding imagery as it is used in Act II. To whom does Hamlet apply this imagery?
11. What changes are made in The Murder of Gonzago?
12. What theme is shown when Hamlet breaks into Ophelia's room.
13. Give two examples that show how out of balance everything is because the chain of being has been broken.

GIVE THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE FOLLOWING QUOTES
(3 POINTS EACH)

1. "Frailty, thy name is woman."
2. "What a piece of work is man."
3. "There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy."
4. "Though this be madness, yet there is method in't."
5. "To thine own self be true."
6. "I am but mad north-north-west... I know a hawk from a handsaw."
7. "I will obey, my lord."

## HOMEWORK COMPOSITIONS---HAMLET

### Act I

Considering both Hamlet's objective and his obstacles, how does Hamlet's situation resemble that of Oedipus?

### Act II

Hamlet's soliloquy shows that he is acutely self conscious and aware of his flaw.

### Act III

What are Hamlet's feelings toward Gertrude? Are they extreme? Do you sympathize with him? Is she a villain?

### Act IV

Do you feel any sympathy for Claudius? Does he have good points as well as bad points?

### Act V

How does the peripeteia between Hamlet and Laertes speak not just for them, but also for the whole play?

-OR-

Comment on the following quote: "Oedipus and Hamlet stand halfway between human society and something greater in the sky.

HAMLET VOCABULARY TEST
Acts I and II

Each question is worth 5 points; you may receive partial credit.

1. Give 2 words used as synonyms for Hamlet's insanity.

2. Define apparition.
   To whom does the word apply?

3. When Hamlet decides to put on The Murder of Gonzago, he hopes that Claudius will "proclaim his malefactions". What does that phrase mean?

4. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are asked to "glean what afflicts" Hamlet. What does that phrase mean?

5. Why is the word "arras" important to the story?

6. Fill in the blank and then define the word you have selected.
   "____________thy name is woman."

7. Define sullied.

8. What is your word for evil?

9. Define rogue:
   Where does Hamlet place himself when he calls himself a rogue.

10. Define treacherous:
    To whom does the word apply?

11. What is your word for: to try to be like someone else?

To whom does that word apply and how?

12. Give one instance that shows how Hamlet's mettle is tested.

13. What is your word for: foreshadowing evil?

How does the ghost fit that word?

14. Define paragon.
Why does Hamlet feel that men are not paragons?

15. Define offal.
Hamlet refers to whom as offal?

16. To whom do the following 2 words apply?
Define them.

bawdy:

lecherous:

17. What is your word for deadly evil?

18. What is your word for intentionally evil?

19. What is the only way to purge Denmark?

20. Calling Hamlet the "melancholy Dane" refers to which one of his 2 moods?

Hamlet Vocabulary Test #2
( 7 points each)

1. What do the words 'swounds and 'sblood tell the reader about Hamlet?

2. Define quietus:

3. What is your word for a heavy burden?

4. Define bodkin:
   How is that word used in the play?

5. How do the 2 definitions of the word bourn fit into the following phrase?
   "That undiscovered country from whose bourn
   No traveller returns..."

6. Define scourge:
   Why is that word important to the play?

7. What are your 2 words for anger?
   To whom do those 2 words apply?

8. Whom does Hamlet stow?

9. What are your 2 words for fate?

10. Define touchable, solid.
Why is that word important to the play?

11 Where are the following 2 words found?
Define them.

unbated

envenomed

12. What are the 2 Anglo-Saxon prefixes and what is their function?

13. Define the following terms:
prithee

withal

anon

marry

fie

14. To leave the stage (singular) is to_________________.

To leave the stage (plural) is to _________________.

# HUNTINGTON THEATER COMPANY

# MASTER WORKS INSTITUTE IN SHAKESPEARE

Jackie Hensley
April, 1993

I have chosen to use the study of Hamlet as an example of drama in the Elizabethan setting. Hamlet has long been one of my favorite works in the Junior curriculum and I would love to have it come alive for my students so they, too, can appreciate its relevance in today's society. Hamlet is timeless for it is about characters who face confusion, disappointment, anger, frustration, revenge as they try to accept and to solve the problems/conflicts in their lives. These characters and their feelings/lives are very much like ours today. The Hamlet of the 1560's is very much alive in the 1990's.

LEARNERS:

This study of Wm. Shakespeare's Hamlet is designed for high school juniors who are in the college tract. These students are essentially motivated learners who have had experience with two other Shakespearean plays (Romeo and Juliet & Julius Caesar). It is familiar and comfortable with imagery/relaxation techniques and the inclusion of art in the classroom. These students are academically capable and will be serious candidates for four year colleges and graduate study in the future. This study of Hamlet takes approximately 3-4 weeks to complete.

The following is an outline of the 3-4 week study of Shakespeare's Hamlet.

## HAMLET

I. INTRODUCTION TO THE AGE OF ELIZABETH AND THE ELIZABETHAN WORLD PICTURE:

   A. VIEW AGE OF ELIZABETH

   B. HANDOUT ON ELIZABETHAN WORLD PICTURE

II. INTRODUCTION TO HAMLET:

   A. ROLE PLAYING BETWEEN TWO CHARACTERS (HAMLET AND HIS MOTHER)

      1. HAMLET RETURNS FROM U.C.L.A. TO LOGAN AIRPORT TO MEET HIS MOTHER WHO EXPLAINS THAT HIS FATHER HAS DIED AND THAT SHE HAS MARRIED HIS UNCLE CLAUDIUS.

         a. MOTHER'S EXPLANATION FOR HASTY MARRIAGE

         b. HAMLET'S REACTION TO THE NEWS

   B. HAVE CLASS QUICKLY JOT DOWN REACTIONS/FEELINGS (WORD/PHRASES) TOWARDS:

      1. HAMLET

      2. MOTHER

      3. CLAUDIUS

      **METAPHORS

   C. SHARE THESE REACTIONS IN SMALL COOPERATIVE GROUPS--- SHARE WITH ENTIRE CLASS.

   D. USING ANY COLORS/IMAGES DRAW INDIVIDUAL INTERPRETATIONS OF THESE 3 CHARACTERS. THEY MAY BE IN ANY FORM AND IN ANY ARRANGEMENT.

   E. HANG THESE DRAWINGS TO BE REEXAMINED AT THE END OF HAMLET.

   F. VERBALLY IDENTIFY THE PROBLEM(S) AND POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS.

III. READ THE PLAY ALOUD IN CLASS AND DISCUSS.

A. VIEW AGE OF ELIZABETH AND RELATE TO THE TEXT.

B. VIEW POISONED KINGDOM AND RELATE TO THE TEXT.

C. VIEW THE READINESS IS ALL AND RELATE TO THE TEXT.

IV. ACTIVITIES:

A. ROLE PLAY VARIOUS SCENES/CHARACTERS.

B. WRITE LETTERS TO CHARACTERS (I.E. HAMLET TO ORPHELIA).

C. ANSWER LETTERS FROM CHARACTERS (I.E. FROM LAERTES/CLAUDIUS TO HAMLET).

D. ROLE PLAY SWORD FIGHT SCENE BETWEEN HAMLET/LAERTES.

E. RECREATE THE "MOUSETRAP" DRAMA.

F. RESEARCH VARIOUS ASPECTS OF THE ELIZABETHAN PERIOD AND PRESENT FINDINGS TO CLASS (INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP WORK). RESEARCH MAY BE IN CONJUNCTION WITH ANOTHER CLASS (I.E. WORLD HISTORY, ART).

1. CLOTHING

2. ART

3. ARCHITECTURE

4. MUSIC

5. EVERYDAY LIFE

6. WM. SHAKESPEARE

7. INDIVIDUAL/GROUP CHOICE

G. CREATE NEWSPAPER HEADLINES/STORIES TO ILLUSTRATE VARIOUS SCENES.

H. WRITE A POEM TO EXPLAIN FEELINGS OF OR TOWARDS ANY CHARACTERS, SITUATIONS, PROBLEMS, SOLUTIONS, ETC.

I. CREATE BOARD/COMPUTER GAMES.

J. REWRITE QUOTATIONS IN REBUS.

K. PARAPHRASE SOLILOQUY IN MODERN TERMS "TO BE OR NOT TO BE. . ." (I.E. TO SMOKE OR NOT TO SMOKE. . .).

L. CREATE A POSTER ADVERTISING A PERFORMANCE OF THE PLAY.

M. DESIGN THREE COSTUMES FOR CHARACTER(S) TO WEAR DURING THE PLAY.

N. PICTURE CHARACTERS/SETTING IN 1993 WITH ORIGINAL DRAWINGS OR MAGAZINE PICTURES.

O. FINAL ACTIVITY--EXAMINE INITIAL DRAWINGS OF HAMLET, QUEEN GERTRUDE, AND CLAUDIUS. DETERMINE WHICH ARE STILL RELEVANT AND WHY.

V. WRITE A MAJOR THEME ON ONE OF THE FOLLOWING TOPICS:

ILLUSION VS. REALITY

ROLE OF FATE

CORRUPTION AND DISEASE

TRAGEDY OF GRIEF

THE ROLE OF WOMEN

## PHILOSOPHY: RATIONALE:

It is so important to understand the times when Hamlet was first seen--the time of Queen Elizabeth I (1558-1603). The unit begins with the film The Age of Elizabeth. This film will explain:

1. The personal life of Queen Elizabeth.
2. The contributions and discoveries of England during Elizabeth's reign.
3. The people's response to Queen Elizabeth.
4. A biography of William Shakespeare.
5. A history of the theater.
    a. Shakespeare's Globe Theater
    b. use of asides and soliloquies
    c. staging and stage directions
    d. props and sets

6. The audience--from the aristocracy to the groundlings had to be satisfied in every play.
    a. comedy/humor
    b. murder/revenge
    c. adventure/intrigue
    d. ghosts/supernatural
    e. blood/gore
    f. poetry/language
    g. majesty/royalty

After viewing this film the students should be able to

1. Characterize Elizabeth I.
2. Characterize her reign.
3. Know biographical information about Shakespeare.
4. Understand the demands and structure of the Elizabethan Theater made on the playwright and the audience.
5. Describe the make-up of the Elizabethan audience and its tastes.
6. Contrast an Elizabethan audience with a modern one.

In addition to the film The Age of Elizabeth, the students will be distributed a 2-page handout on the Elizabethan World Picture which explains Elizabethan views and beliefs on the chain of being, ethics, the stars, fate, and the wheel of fortune. This hand-out is included on the following two pages.

## PARAPHRASE OF THE ELIZABETHAN, WORLD PICTURE

The medieval concept of the world was that of an ordered universe. There were fixed systems of hierarchy. The universe was considered or called the Macrocosm, and man himself, the Microcosm (little world).

These people believed in a chain of being. Man was considered to be living in the middle fo the chain, and the chain composed of various groups.

1. the inanimate OBJECTS. . . . .the elements (liquid and metals)
2. existence and life class. .the vegetative (plants and flowers)
3. the sensitive class. . . . .creatures like shellfish (no memory, but a sense of touch); animals having instinct and movement; higher animals, like horses and dogs.
4. MAN HIMSELF. . . . . . man has existence, life, feeling, and understanding.
   Because man is the sum total of all of the faculties of earthly phenomena, he is a little world.
5. the Angel Class. . . . . . .spiritual elements
6. God. . . . . . . . . . . . . .the supreme Being in the climb up the ladder.

All of the above classes in the chain of being are connected so that if one of the chains is disturbed so too will the others be.

The chain is like a ladder, and it has a tendency to bring man upward to God. The chain also allowed each class to excel in a certain particular-the dolphin, king of fish; the eagle among birds; the lion among beasts; the emperor among men; God among angels; the sun over the stars; justice over virtues; the head over the body.

The Elizabethans further believed that if one of these classes were out of order, then the other chains were. Man bridges the great gap between the cosmos and all of creation because he composes matter and spirit. Because man is composed of these various elements, he finds his life very difficult to order and keep in order because he is pulled in different directions by different faculties.

Everything in the chain of being observes: degree, order, priority and place. When there is disorder in the heavens, there is disorder in the state.

The Elizabethans also believed that the brain of man was divided into three DIVISIONS: 1. lowest, the five senses; 2. middle, common sense, fancy; 3. highest, reason (understanding, wit, will)

Elizabethan ethics (the right way of acting) is based upon understanding and will. They thoroughly believed that the will could be vicious in the eternal battle of passion and reason. Too great a haste of a decision and caution often persuade us to wrong choice.

Thus, the conflicts of characters and their natures which we find in any of Shakespeare's plays are those between passion and reason. A man ruled by passion or emotion will cause his own downfall as well as the downfall of others near him.

The concept of the stars and Fortune's Wheel:

The Elizabethans believed that life was like a wheel "fortune's wheel." It continually turned throughout life. Sometimes a person would be on top and enjoy success, only, in turn, to have the wheel turn, and be destroyed or deprived of his riches. Man always seemed to be the slave as well as the victim of chance.

To people of the 16th and 17th century, the "bad" man is most unhappy when he is most successful in his evil plans. If a man is weak willed, the stars may greatly influence him, and he may forget that reason should rule the passions. In this way, allowing passion to rule him, man becomes more like a beast than a man.

Hamlet's words on man: (Act II, sc. 2) His words reflect all of above explanation of how complicated man's life really is. In medieval tradition, Shakespeare's version of man is what he ideally is capable to be. Shadespeare places man in the traditional cosmic setting between angels and beasts:

> He says, "What a piece of work is a man! how noble
> in reason. How infinite in faculty! in form and
> moving how express and admirable! in action how
> like an angel; in apprehension how like a god;
> the beauty of the world; the paragon of animals.

It is so important to set the scene before reading the play . . .

- a. to build an understanding of characters, problems, possible solutions.
- b. to pique interest by actively involving class.
- c. to have students see the relevance of the Hamlet of the 1500's to 1993.
- d. to begin to build connections to their individual lives for life-long learning to take place.

INTRODUCTION TO HAMLET:

Begin with quiet time to close their eyes/quiet eyes to reflect about the classes of the day, the tensions/problems at school and then to slowly go into the classes of the future----classes at college. Ask them to picture themselves in college. Ask them to think about which college they would like to attend: the kind of school, location, size, etc. Ask, "Anyone have any ideas about specific colleges you'd like to attend? What programs are you interested in? How about size--large or small? Would you like to be close to home or far away? Have them slowly open their eyes and share some of the pictures/images they saw first in small, non-threatening groups of 3-4 and then with the whole class. Then ask them to imagine with you that a college freshman has been called home from U.C.L.A. by his mother. She is meeting him at Logan Airport.

Make prior arrangements with one of the students in the class to do this role play with you. The teacher will role play the mother and the student will assume the role of the U.C.L.A. freshman. Tell him/her exactly what you tell the class. Through the role play, the class should learn that the young man's name is Hamlet, that his father has just been buried and that his mother had recently married his father's brother Claudius in an attempt to continue the family business without interruption. As the young student asks many relevant questions, the mother (teacher) should attempt to explain very quickly, very casually what has happened and show far more interest in her son's luggage than his questions and concerns about his father's death, the funeral, the marriage, the business, etc.

Stop the role play at this point and ask the class to jot words/phrases to describe individual feelings towards or about Hamlet, Queen Gertrude, his mother or Uncle Claudius. Then share these reactions in small cooperative groups of three or four and then have each group select one or two responses to share with the whole class.

For the next step, ask the groups to create metaphors from the words/phrases. (i.e. Hamlet is like. . . ., Hamlet's mother, Queen Gertrude is like. . . ., Uncle Claudius is like. . . .). Each group will share these and discuss them. Tell the class to keep these individual and group responses for they may want to use them later in their letter writing and/or poetry assignments.

Next distribute a large piece of white drawing paper to each group and colored pencils/magic markers. Encourage the groups to illustrate visually in any color(s), form, image, and in any arrangement, their interpretation of Hamlet, Queen Gertrude, and Claudius. Each group will explain its drawing. Have them put their names on the back of the drawing and tell the class these will be hung around the room until the end of the play when the class will look at them again.

As a class make a cluster drawing of any problems/conflicts for Hamlet, Queen Gertrude, Claudius, Denmark and the possible solutions. Place these responses on the board or a huge chart and discuss them. Now they should be ready and eager to read Hamlet. Without reading a word of the text, they know the names of the major characters, the situation and problems, and have make individual connections to the play.

## PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES:

Hamlet is read/taught in Junior English to accomplish the following objectives/goals:

a. to analyze the structure of the Shakespearean drama.

b. to study the various concepts of imagery.

c. to show the effects of one character upon another.

d. to examine the characteristics of tragedy found in Hamlet, especially, Hamlet as a tragic hero.

e. to study major themes/devices common in three of Shakespeare's plays (Romeo & Juliet, J. Caesar, and Hamlet).

f. to determine universal themes in Hamlet.

g. to examine the play-within-a-play in Hamlet.

h. to recognize the use of irony throughout the play.

i. to know the chain of being and be able to give examples of it.

j. to recognize the three movements of the plot (ghost story, detective story, and revenge story).

k. to promote creative thinking skills.

l. to encourage problem solving.

m. to foster co-operation and an acceptant attitude among students.

n. to develop thematic curricula in the classroom.

o. to help build a stronger sense of self-esteem for each student.

While reading Hamlet, it is important to point out that there are three parts or movements. First, there is the ghost story; second, a detective story; and, finally, a revenge story. Each of these movements rises to a climax, to a scene of great feeling and conflict. Begin the play by concentrating on the first thirteen lines to see how much a skillful playwright can stimulate our imagination by words along.

In less than 75 words, we learn the time of day, the kind of place, the character of the weather, the identity of the speakers, and the fact that something is wrong. In fact, something is very wrong; the approaching guard is so nervous that he challenges the guard on duty. (Act I, Scene i) Beginning with a close attention to Shakespeare's text leads to an easy discovery of the ghost, detective, and revenge stories which develop as the play is read in class.

Hamlet should be read in parts as a play and presented in an area designated as the "stage." The five-act play was designed to lead the action from the introduction (Act I) to the climax (Act III) to the conclusion (Act V). A quiz at the end of each act will help determine if the students are grasping the main ideas.

It is important to point out where the ghost story ends and the detective story begins (Act I, Scene v) for now Hamlet needs proof, evidence that Claudius did murder his father. Special attention and scrutiny should be given to the tormented soliloquies of young Hamlet as he struggles to discover the truth (Act I, Scene ii, Act II, Scene ii, and Act III, Scene i). Surely the students can identify with the feelings of frustration, disappointment, and anger that young Hamlet expresses in his powerful soliloquies. Each of us, students and teacher, can relate to "O, cursed spite, that ever I was born to set it right!" (Act I, Scene v)----Why me?

The detective story ends when Claudius interrupts the "Murder Gonzago" and asks for the lights (Act III, Scene ii) Hamlet is now sure and the third movement begins, the revenge story. The revenge story can be traced with the characters of both Laertes and Fortinbras as they, too, seek to right the wrongs afflicted upon their fathers. There is a poison that causes these wrongs. This poison is responsible for the illness and the death of the characters and the play's setting Denmark.

Denmark becomes a poisoned Kingdom both literally and figuratively.

The identification of the kinds of poison present in Hamlet will be examined with the film The Poisoned Kingdom. The film traces the poison from the horrible tale of the ghost of King Hamlet to the "o'erhasty hasty," marriage (Act II, Scene ii) of Queen Gertrude, the empty advice of Polonius, the hollow and empty King Claudius, the tortured Hamlet and, finally, to the poison involved in the deaths of Laertes, Hamlet, Claudius and Queen Gertrude.

The poison is not only literal. It is a spiritual poison of greed, lust, cruelty, and self-will which has poisoned the whole kingdom. This idea is an important consideration in the study of Hamlet. The complete reading of Hamlet will provide ample opportunities to point out this theme of poison as it appears in all three movements----ghost, mystery, and revenge.

In all three movements the young Hamlet faces painful disappointments in those he loves. With the horrors in his own family, he can no longer think of the world as a place of beauty and delight. The garden has gone to seed and has a serpent in it. It is the evil of which human nature is capable. Hamlet says "'Tis an unweeded garden that grows to seed." (Act I, Scene ii). He faces the disappointment and deception and makes himself ready to do what he feels he is compelled to do----revenge his father's death. He is ready for this task, he is ready to face death (Act V, Scene ii).

This final theme of acceptance will be presented with the film The Readiness is All. Hamlet realizes that there is no human life without stain. Human beings may not be born guilty, but guilt overtakes each of us before we are very old. Hamlet is literally faced with the acceptance of death in the graveyard scene just before the duel. It becomes an image of man's fate---an image of the whole world as a graveyard, where all humans aims and ambitions end in the dust. The gravedigger makes this point most clear to us in this scene. (Act V, Scene i) Hamlet's "readiness is all" (Act V, Scene i) comment illustrates his knowledge and acceptance of the fact of death----a difficult realization for all humans.

This unit is based on the inclusion and analysis of three films----The Age of Elizabeth, The Poisoned Kingdom and The Readiness is All. These three supplement and enrich the reading/presentation of the text. The final activities offer a variety of activities in order to successfully reach the various learning styles present in every classroom. The possibilities for teaching Hamlet are endless and this is only meant to be one approach.

# ***Hamlet* as Never Seen Before**

Alicia Roy
Palmer High School

A Curriculum Guide

to

Student-Conceived Innovative Productions

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## *HAMLET* **as Never Seen Before**

The purpose of this curriculum is for the students to outline plans to present *Hamlet* in a way never seen before and sure to be a hit. In order to accomplish this, the students must understand all of the parts that are involved in producing a play as well as understand the play itself.

*Teacher*: Alicia Roy
*School*: Palmer High
*Class*: Senior English, college-bound students from a suburban homogeneous community

### DAY ONE - Introducing an Elizabethan Play

*Note*: Students must have seen a live theatrical production prior to this lesson plan. I have also taken my students on a guided tour of the school's theater/auditorium.

**Rationale**: This lesson plan is a prereading cooperative learning activity which will enable the students to read an Elizabethan play (in this case *Hamlet*) with a purpose--not merely to flounder, or feel as though they are. Allowing the students to feel comfortable with the surroundings in which the play was performed allows them to begin with their feet on the ground and feel "good" about reading Shakespeare.

**Instructional Objectives:**

* Each learner will write the same "brainstorming" list as every other learner from the same predetermined cooperative learning group (to ensure teamwork.)

* Every group will share group answers to be written on a large master sheet. "Winners" who share are selected from a basket containing their names; hands are not chosen so that all students have an equal chance of sharing.

* Each student will write another list, this one discussing the Elizabethan theater as it compares to the theater today.

* Every group will skim the Shakespearean text for examples to support any of the areas discussed in the lesson.

**Instructional Materials:**

* Each student has a notebook and a copy of *Hamlet*.

* The instructor has large sheets of poster-sized paper and chalk.

**Instructional Procedure:**

1. On the top of one of the large sheets of paper, the teacher writes "When I go to the theater today I see:"

2. In groups, students will have exactly 4 minutes to brainstorm their responses to the beginning of the posted sentence. Each student in the group must have the same list including all responses.

3. To be certain that students are considering the various aspects of a theatrical production, the teacher will write five words on the board: actors, costumes, props, publicity, scenery.

4. Student groups are then given exactly 3 minutes to be certain the group has ideas to share for each of the five areas.

5. Students then separate from their groups (after thanking group members), return to their original seats, and at least one winner is randomly selected from each group to write a group answer on the large sheet of paper. Additional answers are then added by the teacher or other students as suggested or necessary. This portion of the lesson should take about 5 minutes. (Examples of answers which are helpful for the next part of the lesson and the remainder of the curriculum unit include: the proscenium or thrust stage, the time the play begins, the type of acting company, the playbill, and the number and type of sets.)

6. Another large sheet of paper is posted with the heading: "If I could go to an Elizabethan playhouse I would see:"

7. The students are then given information on Elizabethan theater to correspond to those ideas found on the first sheet (15 min.)

8. Working individually or with a neighbor for 5 minutes, each student will skim through *Hamlet* for support for anything discussed in class. (ex: I.i.7 "This now struck twelve" suggests time; I.i.77 Hamlet's "inky cloak" helps with costuming; I.v.148 "Ghost cries under the stage" suggests that an actor was under the stage)

9. Use any of the remaining minutes to share findings.

**Motivational Techniques:**

* Allowing the students to work in groups provides opportunity for each student to be an active learner who must speak and does feel satisfaction as s/he realizes that s/he does have something to share.

* Because winners are chosen, all students participate in the groups as they need to have ideas to share if they are selected to be a "winner."

* Applying what was discussed to an actual text gives relevancy to the lesson.

**Evaluative Procedures:**

1. The large sheets of paper to which all groups must add show that the students have contemplated the theater.

2. Each student must also have a list comparing theater today with theater of the sixteenth century to keep in her/his notebook.

3. While on this unit, class will begin daily by sharing any new finding from the reading which can be added to the large sheet and notebooks. This should help maintain enthusiasm for students.

4. This lesson is the beginning of a unit which concludes with each student presenting the plans for a production of *Hamlet*.

## DAY TWO - Collaborative Learning Journals

**Rationale:** Each night the students are assigned some reading of the play for homework. To check that they are accomplishing this reading, they are also required to write at least three questions they have about the reading and suggest some answers. This lesson plan will provide examples of the types of questions which may be used for their collaborative learning journals.

**Instructional Objectives:**

* Each learner will have written at least three questions and suggest possible answers in a journal.

* Working in groups, each student will write three additional questions with answers from their group members.

**Instructional Materials:**

* Group folders with the check-in sheet stapled to the inside.

**Instructional Procedure:**

1. For homework, each student should have written three questions with answers suggested by the reading.

* The format for this Q and A writing is to fold the paper in half the long way, putting the question on the left and the answer on the right. At least one side of the paper must be used for these three questions. (Space needs to be left to add to the answers as the play is read and additional information is learned.)

2. In their check-in groups at the beginning of the class (cooperative learning groups they will use for the duration of this project) students check that each person has completed the assignment. Each group has a folder to mark whether or not the homework has been done.

* Each group has a manila folder in which a paper with boxes and columns has been stapled so that they may check-in every day. A key is also included. (A copy of the chart has been included at the end of this lesson plan.)

3. Each student will share his/her three questions and answers with the others in the group, discussing them as they are able.

4. Each student will also copy at least three additional questions and answers from the other members of the group. Numbers two through four of this procedure should take no longer than 7 minutes. (On DAYS THREE - ELEVEN when this lesson is repeated, only Instructional Procedure 1-3 must be followed.)

5. Students then return to their seats and winners are chosen. (A winner is defined as any student whose name is drawn from a basket which contains the names of all of the students.) Each winner shares a question and possible answer.

* Questions which contain YES or NO answers are not allowed for their journals. Examples of questions I have received from the beginning of the play are:

Who really is this ghost?
Is the ghost friendly?
What does Ophelia truly think about Hamlet?

**Motivational Techniques:**

* Once again, the group work ensures that each person is an active learner.

* As the students do not know who the winners will be, they sincerely try to think of some Q and A.

**Evaluative Procedures:**

1. All of the questions and answers that the students write while reading will be kept in a journal which will be collected at the end of the reading of the play.

2. As students read more of the play, they are encouraged to add to the answers they had originally formulated by writing the acts and scenes of the play that contain the new information and then explaining it.

3. The students' comprehension of the play will also be evident by the types of Q and A they are giving.

# Check-In Sheet

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Key:

X = Yes, I have it.
— = No, I don't.
+ = Completed assignment late.
A = Absent.

## DAY THREE - Explaining the Project

(Act I and part of II should now be read.)

**Rationale:** The students are going to act as though they are noted stage producers who have been asked to present *Hamlet*. They must work together to convince the artistic director that their production is worthy of being put on the stage. By doing this extensive project, each student will understand the various components of the theater and also demonstrate an understanding of *Hamlet*.

**Instructional Objectives:**

* Working as a team of no more than three (selected from the members of their group) the students will be asked to explain, through any medium, how they intend to consider concept, casting, scenery, costumes, music and publicity.

*Each group will present its concept and materials before the class at the end of the reading of the play.

**Instructional Materials:**

* Each student needs a handout entitled "So You Want To Produce **Hamlet**."

**Instructional Procedures:**

1. Each class should begin with the groups checking-in their homework (the collaborative learning journals) and discussing their questions. Then the class should come together and discuss the reading by focusing on the questions the students wrote. A discussion then ensues.

2. After 20 minutes the students should have discussed their major concerns thus far and the discussion is stopped. Each student is given a copy of the handout.

3. An explanation of the handout will consume the remainder of the period. (Any remaining time should be used to have the students choose their partners from within their group and begin sharing ideas. Decide at this time whether a group grade will be given, or the students will divide the parts of the project and be graded on these.)

[4. The daily discussion of the homework journals should take one half of the class time. The remainder of the time will be devoted to the project/lesson plan.]

**Motivational Techniques:**

* Students usually prefer to work in groups. Thus, knowing that they may should inspire them. If the students do wish, they may work by themselves, in which case they still have the benefit of working with the other members of their check-in group to share ideas and concerns.

* A presentation will follow all of this work. As students want to do a good job for their classmates, they usually work harder than if the work were to be placed only in the hands of the teacher.

**Evaluative Procedures:**

* The final project and presentation will be graded.

Sr. English
Ms. Roy

## *So You Want to Produce Hamlet*

We are all noted stage producers for the live theater who have been asked to think of a new way to present this Shakespearean play. The concept that you develop should show the use of your imagination in coming up with a presentation of the **play** never seen before, and sure to be a hit.

In order to convince an artistic director that your play is worthy of a production, you must present the details of your concept. The details must include the following parts.

**CONCEPT:** Explain the overall concept -- what will make your play the best production yet to be done of Hamlet.

**CASTING:** You may choose any people whose acting talents you know either through the stage, television, or movies. Be sure to explain why you have chosen these actors.

**SCENERY:** Make a detailed description or three-dimensional model of the finished scenery. You may use any medium to complete this portion -- paints, markers, pencil.

**COSTUMES:** Present each character in costume. Some ways to show the costumes are through cut out pictures, sewn fabrics, drawn clothing.

**MUSIC:** Wherever appropriate, select music for your production. Be sure to tell where the music will be in the play as well as the titles and lyrics of the selections. Try to include a tape of any songs to be used.

**PUBLICITY:** Design a logo which symbolizes your production. Then use this logo on a playbill, posters, and tickets. You may even choose to include actual radio and television scripts and commercials.

**EXTRAS:** If you wish to include any other aspects of your concept to convince the artistic director, feel free!

## *Passing it in*

Please put all of your production information together in some form which from the outside will attract the attention of the artistic director while on the inside offer much information.

And as is said in the theater, **Break a Leg.**

## DAY FOUR - Journals and Project Groups

(Act II should be read.)

**Rationale:** The lesson plans for the next two weeks focus on the rationale offered through both DAYS TWO and THREE in the previous lessons. In addition, this lesson will offer ways to organize time to meet deadlines.

**Instructional Objectives:**

* Each student will have all concerns in the first two acts of Hamlet addressed.

* Each student group will begin to discuss the various aspects of the project.

* Each student group will formulate a plan of attack to meet the project deadline.

**Instructional Procedure:**

1. Use the first half of the class for the students to share their collaborative writing journals based on the established format.

2. Tell the students they will have two weeks to complete the project.

3. Brainstorm possible ways to divide the project pieces to meet the deadline, knowing that each group will have no more than one half of each class period for these two weeks to work on the project. Use a large sheet of paper which can be posted to record the ideas so that students can refer to the suggestions as needed.

4. Students should then be given the remainder of the time to work in their groups while the teacher visits each group.

**Evaluative Procedures:**

1. The discussion of the Q and A should be an adequate indicator of comprehension to this point.

2. The teacher's meeting with each group will determine the understanding of its members.

## DAYS FIVE through SEVEN - Research

(III should be read.)

**Rationale:** As the students think about the project more, they may have questions about the various aspects that are a part of producing a play. Completing some research in the Media Center will provide answers.

**Instructional Objectives:**

* Students will research one of four topics: scenery, costumes, music or publicity and share their findings.

* Every student will use his/her research skills to locate necessary information.

* Each student will take notes on all of the four topics providing each a foundation on which to build while thinking about the project and concept.

**Instructional Materials:**

* Arrange the time with the school librarian or media specialist.

*Bring in all personal applicable texts, including copies of *Dramatics* magazine.

**Instructional Procedure:**

1. Be sure to begin with the check-in groups and collaborative learning journals. (The media center has a space designated for classroom purposes.)

2. As the school library is automated, a quick review of how to use the facility and where all of the resources are located is needed.

3. Randomly assign each check-in group one of the four areas -- scenery, costumes, music, publicity.

4. Each group will find at least three sources with information that could assist in completing the projects. Possible suggestions include reviews of past productions of *Hamlet* to see how some of these aspects were approached, general books on the assigned area, and even general magazines (especially for ideas on set layouts and costumes/ fashions.)

5. Students should not be allowed to check the books out of the library to be certain that all students can use these sources.

6. Use DAYS FIVE and SIX to do the research and DAY SEVEN to share. Stay in the Media Center for DAY SEVEN so students can present pictures and information using reference books.

7. Drawing winners, share at least three findings from each of the areas. Students should be taking notes on anything which could be useful for their presentation.

## DAY EIGHT - "To be, or not to be"

(IV.vi. should be read.)

**Rationale:** One of, if not, the most quoted line in Shakespeare is III.i.64 from *Hamlet* - the first line of the "to be, or not to be" soliloquy. Therefore, one lesson plan could easily be devoted to this speech. This lesson is also a bit different from the others in the curriculum and offers necessary variety.

**Instructional Objectives:**

* Each student will understand the significance of this most famous soliloquy.

* Each student group will submit a writing selection which shows the ability to apply the understandings of this soliloquy using a different persona.

**Instructional Materials:**

* Write the following two possible writing persona choices on the board:

> *Persona 1*: Assume the persona of Ophelia, overhearing Hamlet's soliloquy. You are very concerned about the ideas and feelings he expresses. Write a journal entry expressing how you feel now that he has forgotten your love. Your entry should indicate the inner turmoil in your mind brought about by the conflict of your love for Hamlet and your father's instructions to keep away from Hamlet.
>
> *Persona 2*: Imagine you are Hamlet's therapist. You have received a cassette tape of his musings. Write a summary of his mental condition and explain your recommendations for treatment.

(These persona have been adapted from Sundance Publishers' *Shakespeare Persona*.)

**Instructional Procedure:**

1. Begin with check-in groups and collaborative learning journals. Limit this activity to 10 minutes.

2. As a class, discuss III.i.64-96. If students do not offer ideas, or to encourage all in class to participate, use the winners' basket (10 minutes).

3. Allow the students to choose their own groups of not more than three. (As all of the other group work has had limited student choice, this activity which lasts but one class period could be accomplished by students choosing their friends or partners, and not using heterogeneous grouping.)

4. Allow the student groups to choose either persona. Each student group will write one journal entry/ summary. Require the students to use specifics from the soliloquy and other parts of the play to support their ideas.

5. Have the students read their writings to the entire class and then hand them in to be graded. Additional time may be needed the next day to share.

**Motivational Techniques:**

* Because the students can work in any group they desire, and they know one objection teachers have to student-selected groups is the small amount of work that is produced due to wasted time, the groups tend to get right to work to show they can stay on task and complete the assignment in a limited amount of time while having fun.

* The written responses tend to be amusing and students enjoy hearing these persona writings which bring Shakespeare to the twentieth century. Everyone has FUN while applying interpretations of this soliloquy.

**Evaluative Procedure:**

1. The student writing will be graded. If the students are not pleased with the grade they receive on this assignment, they may make revisions and pass it in again.

## DAY NINE - Music

(Vi should be read.)

**Rationale:** As the students continue their work on the play production project, they may need some assistance understanding the songs in *Hamlet*. (All other aspects of the project should be clear by now and students should have ideas on paper for each part of the project.) This lesson plan will introduce the music selections of the play.

**Instructional Objectives:**

* Each student will review the songs in *Hamlet* and understand them as they may have been intended when originally written.

* Students will discuss some songs they are considering for their productions and the significance and effects of the chosen music.

**Instructional Materials:**

* A videotaped version of *Hamlet* cued to the songs beginning in Act IV.

* Reserve the VCR/ TV.

**Instructional Procedure:**

1. The students know the routine and will check-in and discuss their homework.

2. The class will stay together and discuss the songs. Each song will be shown on the video, then discussed while students take notes in their notebooks.

(The information in this section is taken from *The Vocal Songs in the Plays of Shakespeare* by Peter J. Seng. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967.)

A. IV.v. 23-26, 29-32, 35, 37-39.

*How should I your truelove know*
*From one another?*
*By his cockle hat and staff*
*And his sandal shoon.*

. . .

*He is dead and gone, lady,*
*He is dead and gone;*
*At his head a grass-green turf,*
*At his heels a stone.*

. . .

*White his shroud as the mountain snow--*

. . .

*Larded all with sweet flowers*
*Which bewept to the grave did not go*
*With truelove showers.*

Suggested Responses: --This song is pathetic yet also shows Ophelia's affection and "sweetness." She appears mad and isolated, dwelling on thwarted love and death. A reader may be inclined to ask if anyone can escape the madness of Elsinore.

--It should be noted that Ophelia's singing one song after another before some members of the Court of Denmark was strange behavior for an Elizabethan.

--This ballad obviously relates to the death of Polonius. However, Gertrude may also be addressed as she did not seem to mourn adequately for King Hamlet (38-39). Gertrude does stress her own guilt in an aside (17-20) immediately before seeing the mad Ophelia:

To my sick soul (as sin's true nature is)
Each toy seems prologue to some great amiss;
So full of artless jealousy is guilt
It spills itself in fearing to be spilt.

--This song describes a pilgrimage. The cockle-shell was put on the head of a pilgrim to denote the intention of his devotion. The shell is a sign of spiritual regeneration by grace since it was used to pour the waters of Baptism in the early Church. As Hamlet was set out on a pilgrimage of sorts it may be that the sea is the water of death. All that Ophelia seems to know is that Hamlet has gone across the sea on a mysterious voyage: "He is dead and gone." The burial of which Ophelia sings is a foreshadowing of her rites.

*** *Origins*: --Ophelia's first song survives as a traditional tune from the Drury Lane Theater in the eighteenth century and as a popular tune "Walsingham" which is dated to the sixteenth century.

B. IV.v. 48-55, 58-66.

*Tomorrow is Saint Valentine's day.*
*All in the morning betime,*
*And I a maid at your window,*
*to be your Valentine.*

*Then up he rose and donned his clothes*
*And dupped the chamber door,*
*Let in the maid, that out a maid*
*Never departed more.*

. . .

*By Gis and by Saint Charity,*
*Alack, and fie for shame!*
*Young men will do't if they come to't,*
*By Cock, they are to blame.*
*Quoth she, "Before you tumbled me,*
*You promised me to wed."*

*He answers:*
*"So would I 'a'done, by yonder sun,*
*An thou hadst not come to my bed."*

Suggested Responses:--This song alludes to the custom of Valentine's Day whereby the first girl a man sees in the morning is considered his Valentine or true love.

--Ophelia, in her state of madness, may be singing a ballad she heard in childhood by her nurse and now recalls. The reader may ask whether Ophelia was chaste.

--This song follows Claudius' entrance and may be a commentary on his sensuality and relationship with Gertrude and be suggesting that older men "will do't if they come to't."

--Hamlet and Ophelia's relationship (real and supposed) must certainly be chief references in her song.

C. IV.v. 164-166, 187, 190-199.

*They bore him barefaced on the bier*
*Hey non nony, nony, hey nony*
*And in his grave rained many a tear--*

. . .

*For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy.*

. . .

*And will 'a not come again?*
*And will 'a not come again?*
*No, no, he is dead,*
*Go to thy deathbed,*
*He never will come again.*

*His beard was as white as snow,*
*All flaxen was his poll.*
*He is gone, he is gone,*
*And we cast away moan.*
*God 'a' mercy on his soul!*

Suggested Responses:--Here Ophelia seems to be creating the funeral her father did not have as she scatters flowers to the fellow mourners. Ophelia leaves the stage after her Valentine's song and returns after Laertes is on stage. All of Ophelia's family is now together for the last time.

--"Bonny sweet Robin is all my joy" refers to the death of her father, but may also refer to the loss of Hamlet. She may be Maid Marion to Hamlet's Robin Hood.

--Laertes, rash and distraught, fails to see his part in Ophelia's madness.

D. V.i. 69-72, 79-82, 102-105, 129.

*In youth when I did love, did love,*
*Methought it was very sweet*
*To contract--O--the time for--a--my behove,*
*O, methought there--a--was nothing--a--meet.*

. . .

*But age was his stealing steps*
*Hath clawed me in his clutch,*
*And hath shipped me into the land,*
*As if I had never been such.*

. . .

*A pickax and a spade, a spade,*
*For and a shrouding sheet;*
*O, a pit of clay for to be made*
*For such a guest is meet.*

. . .

*O, a pit of clay for to be made*
*For such a guest is meet.*

Suggested Response: -- The clown sings these words while digging the grave of Ophelia. Hamlet hears this song. Through this fragmented and disordered verse of the song the reader may question the portrayal of morality in the play which begins with the "hasty" wedding of Claudius and Gertrude. After the gravedigger sings this song and Hamlet jests over her grave, Ophelia receives her rites. This juxtaposition of song and burial should be considered.

3. Students will then share any songs they have chosen for their productions and the significance of the lyrics.

**Motivational Technique:**

* Playing a portion of the videotape will help students visualize the production while enabling them to hear the songs.

**Evaluative Procedure:**

1. Students' notes will be checked when notebooks are collected.

2. The finished product will show the students' comprehension of the lesson. Students who shared their ideas for songs during this lesson have already received feedback.

## DAYS TEN and ELEVEN - Characters' Values

(All of the play should now be read.)

[Reminder: project due DAY FOURTEEN]

**Rationale:** The actions of the characters should suggest their values. Interpreting complex implied relationships from various pieces of information in the play also suggests the values applicable to a character. This lesson allow the students to practice supporting claims and choices through evidence as they will rank the values of specific characters. The ideas gained in this lesson are then applied by the students as they cast their play.

**Instructional Objective:**

* Each student will rank the values of at least one character.

* Each student will share his/her rankings with the members of his/her check-in group.

* The entire class will debate the chosen values, supporting any choices.

**Instructional Materials:**

* Each student needs a handout entitled "Literary Characters' Values Profile." (See the end of the lesson plan for a copy which was adapted from *Writing About Literature* by Elizabeth Kahn et al. Urbana: ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Comprehension Skills and NCTE, 1984.)

* The name of every character in *Hamlet* needs to be written on folded scraps of paper.

**Instructional Procedure:**

1. Check-in and discuss collaborative writing.

2. Keep the students in their groups, and give each person a handout, explaining any unfamiliar values.

3. Each group will analyze as many characters as there are members in the student group. All of the names of the characters are written on pieces of paper (excluding Hamlet)

and each group chooses the names of the characters it will analyze. After a name is chosen, remove it until each name has been chosen at least once. One person from every group will analyze Hamlet (both before and after his trip to England.)

4. Direct the students to take 4 minutes to mark individually the top five (1-5) and bottom five (18-22) values of the character they chose. The student who chooses Hamlet should be given two copies of the handout to analyze him twice.

5. For the next 10 minutes, discuss each character in the check-in group. Every student needs to write the agreed upon list of top and bottom five values of each character in his/her notebook.

6. In an entire class discussion, debate the ideas using specific actions and motives for support. Begin with Hamlet, then proceed to the characters the students are having the most difficulty casting for their own production. Each student should continue writing the characters and values in a notebook.

7. Continue the class discussion on DAY ELEVEN, leaving at least 10 minutes to discuss any choices of actors they have made for their plays based on the values presented in this lesson.

**Motivational Techniques:**

* With a concrete list of values, each student becomes personally engaged in the assignment and should be less likely to accept any answer uncritically.

* Because of the preliminary student work, the entire class discussion should be at a high level.

* Students should see this lesson as a tool to help them cast their play and be especially attentive when the characters they are having problems with are discussed.

**Evaluative Procedure:**

1. Checking the notebooks for the completed handout and class notes provides evidence of work.

2. The project is obviously the best evaluation as the students must apply what they learned to their individual project.

## Literary Characters' Values Profile

DIRECTIONS: Rank only the top five (using the numbers 1-5) and bottom five (using 18-22) values for the character you selected. Rank the values according to what is most important and least important to the character. Use any space on the right to write support for your claim.

*Character:*

__________1. Acceptance (approval from others)

__________2. Achievement

__________3. Aesthetics

__________4. Altruism

__________5. Autonomy

__________6. Companionship (friendship)

__________7. Creativity

__________8. Health

__________9. Honesty

__________10. Justice

__________11. Knowledge

__________12. Love

__________13. Loyalty

__________14. Morality

__________15. Physical Appearance

__________16. Pleasure

__________17. Power

__________18. Recognition

__________19. Religious Faith

__________20. Self-Respect

__________21. Skill

__________22. Wealth

## DAYS TWELVE and THIRTEEN - Progress and Problems

**Rationale:** Students may still be having problems with some details of the project. Allowing time to discuss these as a class eliminates any last minute excuses such as "I didn't have any ideas for that part." Students will also find solace knowing there are others who have similar concerns and thus should not "give up." Time is allowed to add to the collaborative journals so that when they are passed in they are as complete as possible and the grade earned is reflective of their understanding of *Hamlet*.

**Instructional Objectives:**

* Each student will add at least three pieces of information to three different collaborative journal entries.

* Any learner who has a problem with any portion of the project will address the class.

* Two winners will be selected randomly to share details of one particular area (*ie* scenery, costumes, casting) of the project with the class to seek feedback.

**Instructional Materials:**

* Every student needs to bring in some parts of his/her project to show the class and continue to develop.

**Instructional Procedure:**

1. As there is no longer a need for the check-in groups for homework because the entire play has been read and no additional collaborative journals need to be written, this time should be used to add to their journals.

2. Instruct each student to add some specific information to three different journal entries. Examples of information to be added include quotes with acts, scenes and lines; and descriptions of events.

3. Each learner will then share one of the added bits of information with the other members of the check-in group who will listen and respond.

4. As a class, any students with particular project concerns are asked to address the group. Because the students have been working in their check-in groups, they have discussed any problems with these students and thus it is not beneficial to leave them in their small groups for this exercise.

5. After the feedback has been discussed, or if no one admits to a difficulty, two winners are selected randomly to share one part of their project so that all can see what their classmates are producing and so that any misunderstandings can be rectified and inadequate presentations aided.

6. Any remaining time in DAY TWELVE is given to the students to continue work on the project while the teacher visits each group.

7. DAY THIRTEEN will follow the format outlined in Instructional Procedure 4-6.

**Motivational Techniques:**

* The students are aware that the collaborative journals will be collected and most want to earn the best grade possible. Others wish to appear very knowledgeable before their peers and, therefore, will try to offer ideas and improve their work.

* The deadline of the project acts as sufficient motivation to stay on task.

## DAYS FOURTEEN through SIXTEEN - PROJECT PRESENTATIONS

**Rationale:** After all of the preparation and work done to complete the projects, they should be presented to the class. And to ensure that all are listening, every person needs to analyze what is presented.

**Instructional Objectives:**

* Each group will present its project to the class with every member discussing part.

* Each student will jot down notes for each part of the project for every group.

* Each student will write at least two pieces of constructive criticism as well as comment on two particular aspects of each project which worked especially well.

* Each student will pass in all collaborative writing journal entries.

* Each student will evaluate this fifteen-day project by means of a journal entry.

**Instructional Materials:**

* Be sure to have a TV/ VCR and a cassette player.

* All groups need to pass their projects in on DAY FOURTEEN.

* Every student will need his or her collaborative writing journals for DAY FIFTEEN.

**Instructional Procedure:**

1. One group will make its presentation, dividing the six content areas between the group members so that all members will speak.

2. Meanwhile, the other members of the class write the six areas in their notebooks and describe the manner in which the group approached the area. Homework will be to analyze each group, offering two positive as well as two constructive pieces of criticism.

3. The teacher should likewise have a sheet with the six content areas, assigning a percentage to each, and writing comments for each part to share with the group after all have presented.

4. At the end of DAY FOURTEEN, collect all projects so that no group is given more time to make any adjustments.

5. DAYS FIFTEEN and SIXTEEN should be enough time to finish the group presentations. (Some sample pages from student projects have been copied and included at the end of this curriculum to show the variety of productions suggested.)

6. At the end of DAY FIFTEEN, collect the collaborative writing journals.

7. For homework, assign a written evaluation of the sixteen-day project. Students should respond sincerely through a journal response, offering suggestions wherever appropriate. Collect this at the end of DAY SIXTEEN.

**Motivational Technique:**

* Although students do not particularly enjoy giving oral presentations, knowing that every student will be going through the same process helps to motivate all.

**Evaluative Procedure:**

* The critiques done by the students of the other groups should be perused by the teacher and then handed to the presenters as feedback.

* Every group will receive its written evaluation from the teacher once all projects are displayed in the classroom.

* The collaborative journals will serve as one more way to evaluate the students' understanding of *Hamlet*.

* The critical journal entries should be collected and read by the teacher to improve this curriculum.

## Index to Copies of Portions of Student Projects

**A.** These copies of photographs show some of the methods the students used to present their final package. The bottom picture is of boxes which held all necessary information on the production.

**B.** One version became *Hamnet*, named after Shakespeare's son and including a reference to equipment associated with sports.

**C.** This update of the classic "To be, or not to be" speech was a part of the *Hamnet* production.

**D-E.** To make this play more accessible to children, one group chose the muppets; after all, wrote this group "everyone loves the muppets."

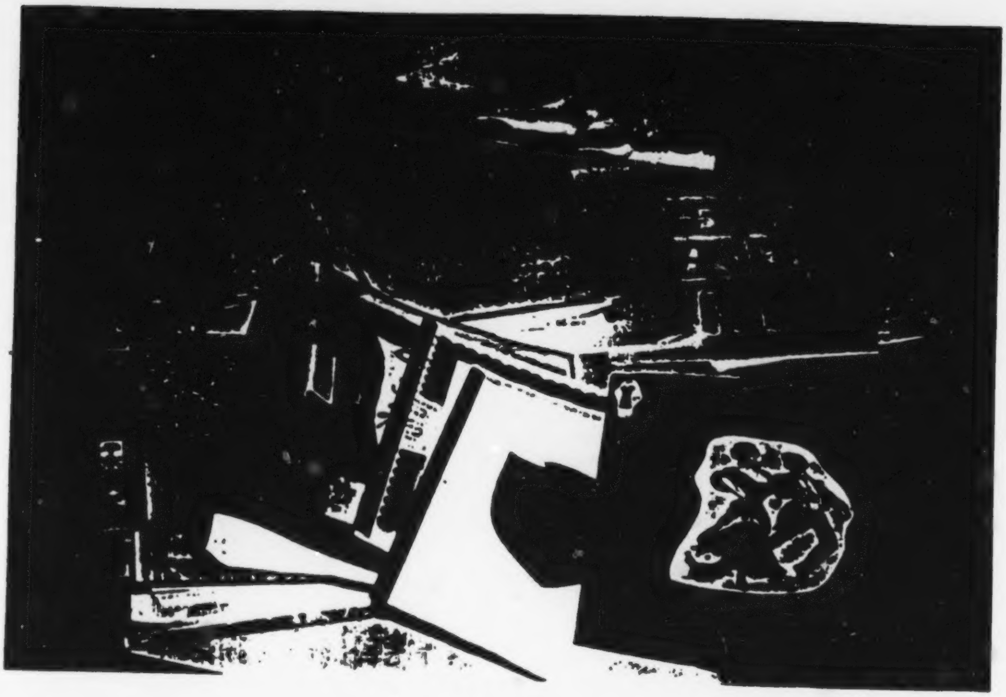
**F-H.** One adaptation, "a tale of murder, mayhem and corruption," included the song "Down in a Hole" to be played during the deadly final scene.

**I-J.** "Flapper Productions" set its play in the 1930s and chose musical selections with a classic flair.

**K.** Yearning for a "down home" approach, *Hamlet* also took on a western theme.

**L.** As an extra, one group wrote some quotes for each character to help explain the reasons for actions and plot development.

A



HAMLET
H
HAMLET

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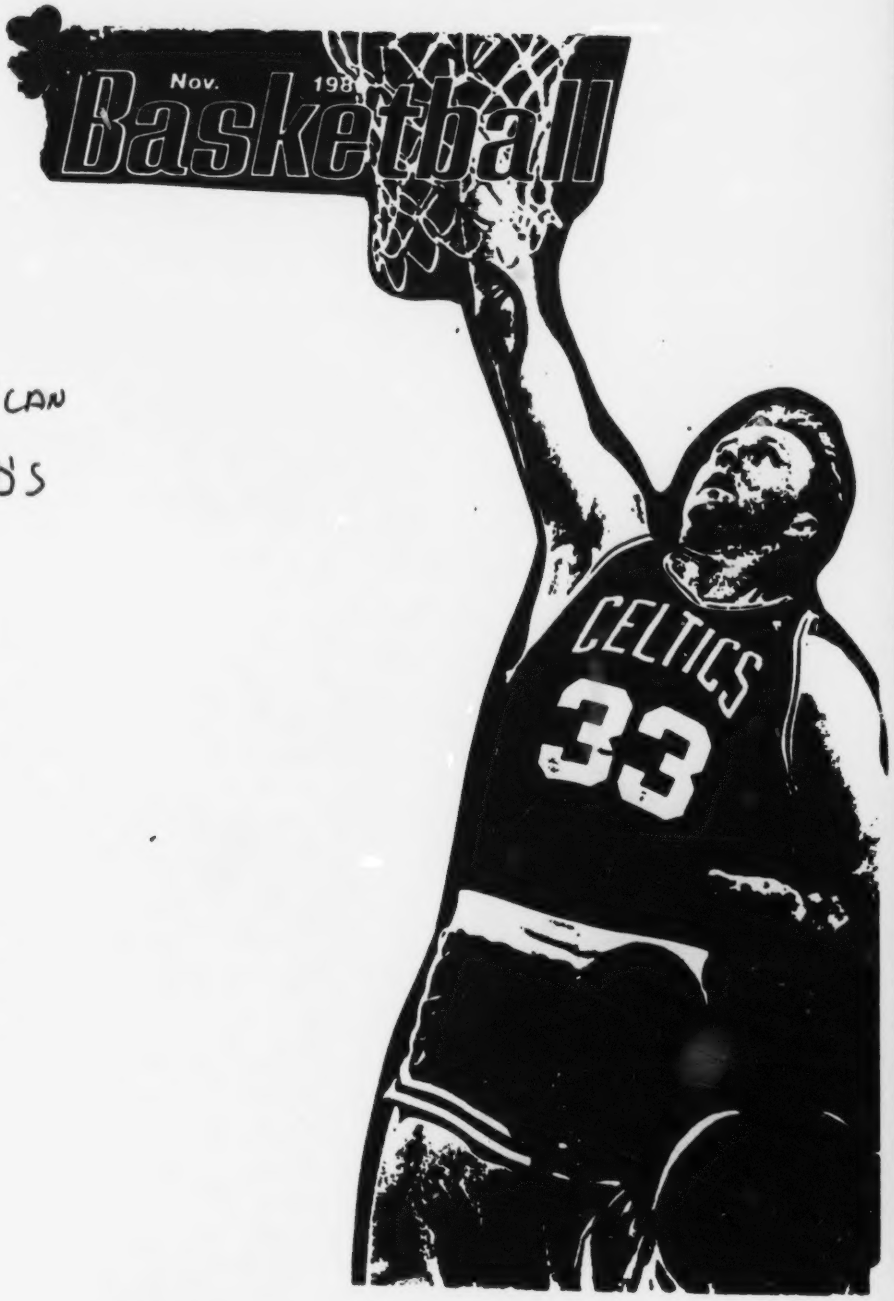
B

# HAMNET

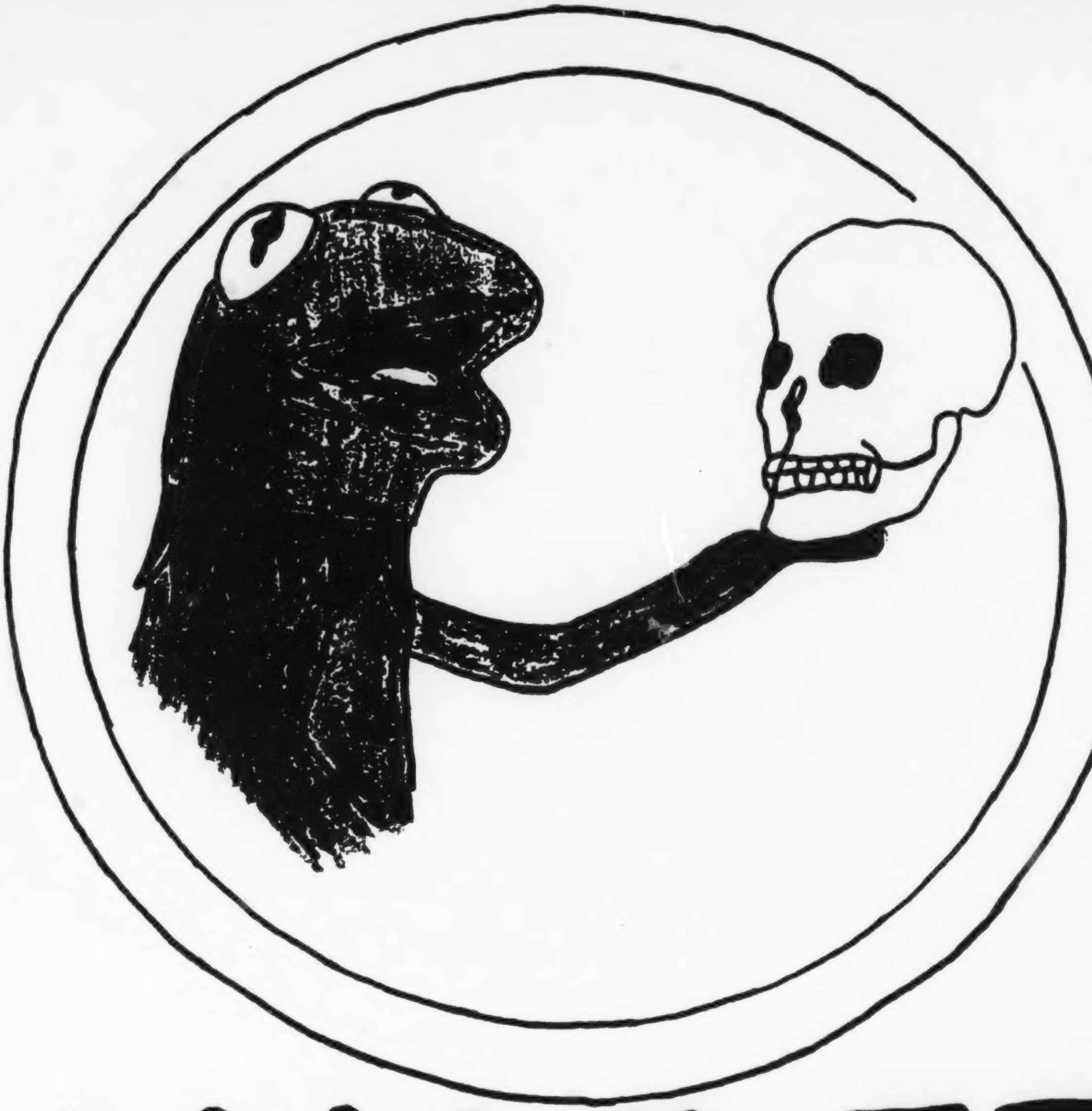

Nov. 198
Basketball
CELTICS
33

An updated American version of the Bard's Hamlet c

# An Updated Scene

To Shoot or not to Shoot, that is the question. Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to shoot the "thee pointer" or to "dish" it to the big man. Keep shooting — to say I end this shooting slump. To shoot — to miss. To miss — perchance to sit the bench: ay, there's the rub.

D



# HAMLET

## A TALE BY
## JIM HENSON

E

## CASTING-

Hamlet - Kermit the Frog (The obvious choice for the leading role.)

Horatio - Fozzy the Bear (He is always associated as a good friend to Kermit, and thus fits the role perfectly.)

Claudius - The Animal (His primitive mind and character matches Claudius' actions in the play.)

Gertrude - Miss Piggy (Always the leading lady, and sides with Hamlet (Kermit) at the end.)

Polonius - Rolph the Dog (His wit and maturity reflect the needed attributes for this character, the king's counselor.)

Laertes - Gonzo (Always the villain, or at least rival to Hamlet (Kermit).)

Ophelia - Skeeter (Only remaining female Muppet to play this "terminal" role.)

Fortinbras - Scooter (The wise, young prince of Norway.)

Other Nonessential Characters - the infamous rats (Always used as the 'extras' in the Muppet productions.)

F

# Hamlet

### By William Shakespeare

Adapted by
Carol L. Drzewianowski

Starring: Ethan Hawke, Bridget Fonda, Campbell Scott, John Cusack, D.B. Sweeney, Woody Allen, Diane Keaton, and Alec Baldwin

Music by: Pearl Jam, The Jesus And Mary Chain, Alice In Chains, and Mother Love Bone

Alternative Action Productions

# Music

H

Alice In Chains
"Down In A Hole"
*Dirt*
Columbia Records

Bury me softly in this womb
I give this part of me for you
Sand rains down and here I sit
Holding rare flowers
In a tomb...in bloom

Down in a hole and I don't know
If I can be saved
See my heart I decorate it
Like a grave
You don't understand who they
Thought I was supposed to be
Look at me now a man
Who won't let himself be

Down in a hole, losin' my soul
Down in a hole, losin' control
I'd like to fly,
But my wings have been so denied

Down in a hole and they've put all
The stones in their place
I've eaten the sun so my tongue
Has been burned of the taste
I have been guilty
Of kicking myself in the teeth
I will speak no more
Of my feelings beneath

Oh I want to be inside of you

Down in a hole, losin' my soul
Down in a hole, feelin' so small
Down in a hole, losin' my soul
Down in a hole, out of control

I'd like to fly but my
Wings have been so denied

To be used in Vii when all the deaths are taking place.

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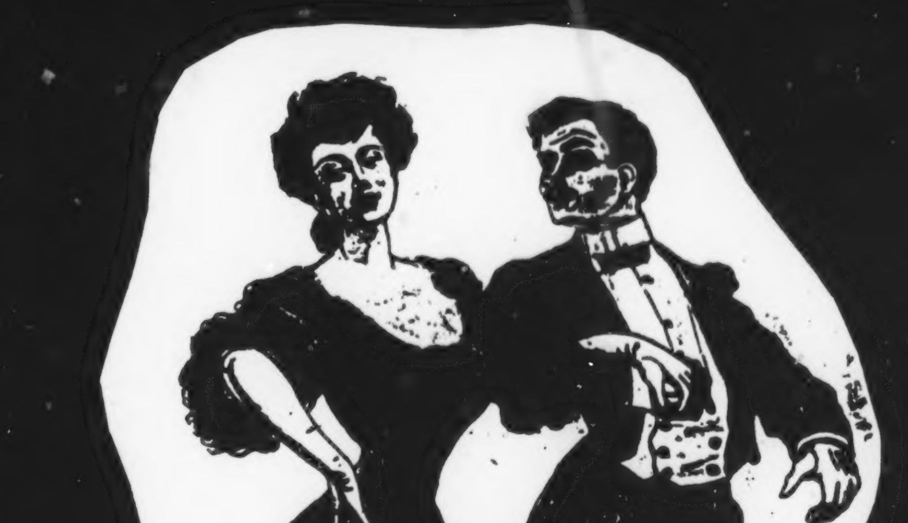

**HAMLET**

1. Intermezzo - Griff Williams
2. Johnson Rag - Glenn Miller
3. In The Mood - Glenn Miller
4. Juke Box Saturday Night - Glenn Miller
5. AUtumn Leaves - David Romaine
6. The Hour of Parting - Belford Hendricks

Flapper Productions 1993

Details on inside cover ->

HAMLET Jennifer Chaffee

1. Intro to set the mood & era
2&3. Various times when Hamlet from afar observes the Queen & Claudius having a good time
4. Players Arrive
5 Hamlet's conversation w/ Gertrude in her chambers about King Claudius
6. Closing after Hamlet's death

B
Hamlet SoundTrack
Jenn chaffee
ON OFF

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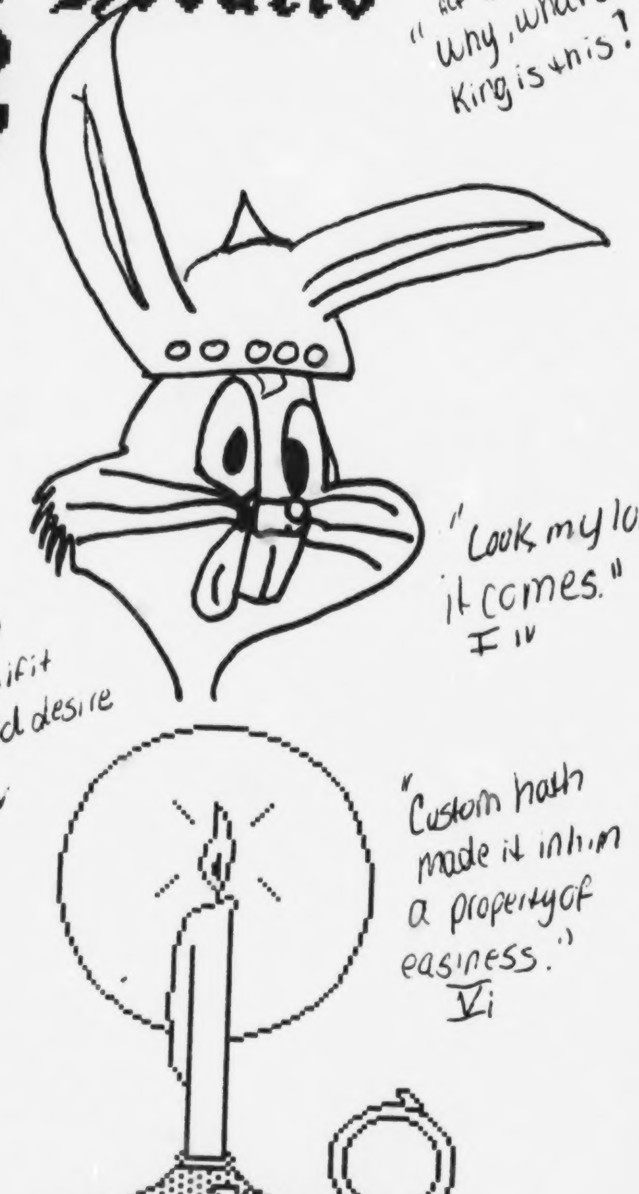
# HAMLET

# Horatio

"Act V ii
"Why, what a
King is this!"

Act I ii
"A countenance
more in sorrow
than in anger."



"Look, my lord
it comes."
I iv

"It beckons you to
go away with it, As if it
some impartment did desire
To you alone." I iv

"Custom hath
made it in him
a property of
easiness."
V i

**Master Works Unit: MACBETH**
Karen Bohlin

## Philosophy

In this three-four week unit students explore and enjoy the world of the Elizabethan Stage and Shakepeare's tragedy through a close examination of MACBETH. Critical thinking, reading and writing as well as speech and drama skills are emphasized throughout the unit. Students have the opportunity to understand and appreciate the effectiveness of drama, the richness of Shakespeare's language, the psychological complexity of character and the power of imagery and theme in the play. Most importantly, students relate to the universality of the human experience portrayed in MACBETH.

## Description of Students

This unit is designed for a heterogeneously grouped sophomore British Literature class of twenty girls. Students come primarily from suburban areas, but vary widely in economic and ethnic background. Though many struggle with Shakespeare, for the most part they are motivated and creative.

At this point in the year, they have completed a unit on OEDIPUS REX and the Theatre of Dionysus, are familiar with Medieval Mystery and Morality Plays, and have studied Shakespeare's life and several of his sonnets. This background not only prepares the students for the unit, but also serves as an excellent basis for comparison and contrast.

## Outline of Objectives

A. To identify the function of the various parts of the Globe
B. To examine the Elizabethan audience: cross section of society/democracy
C. To compare and contrast Elizabethan Theatre with the Theatre of Dionysus and Contemporary theatre in terms of:
   1. purpose
   2. structure
   3. performance
   4. audience
D. To appreciate and employ the various skills of the Elizabethan actors.
E. To unlock meaning in verse
   1. understand metaphorical language
   2. trace motifs
   3. analyze syntax

    4. make inferences

F. To interpret dramatic speeches (soliloquys, monologues, asides) and dramatic scenes

    1. recognize tone shifts
    2. understand character mood, complexity and motivation
    3. determine how to "suit the action to the word, the word to the action" (Hamlet III, ii)
    4. recite, memorize and perform speeches/scenes

G. To recognize irony: verbal, situational and dramatic

H. To explore the meaning of power, ambition, conscience, guilt and evil; their relevance to the play and the human experience

I. To compare and contrast OEDIPUS and MACBETH as tragedies

J. To identify themes in the play and articulate/discuss their universality

K. To substantiate class discussion, creative assignments (oral or written), and analytical essays with specific references to the text

Included in this unit are a number of suggested activities, discussion and paper topics which address many but not all of the objectives outlined above. Some topics are sequential, but for the most part, they can be implemented in an order which suits the particular needs of any given class

## AN AFTERNOON AT THE THEATRE

The overall objective of this lesson is that students experience and appreciate the various elements of staging, acting and audience dynamics in Elizabethan Theatre.

### DAY 1

A. First, I will ask the students to brainstorm for the typical structural and component characteristics of present day theaters (from seats and ticket prices to special effects).

B. After listing their responses on the board, I'll show them a model of the Globe and ask them to identify observable similarities and differences.

C. I will give a brief audiovisual presentation:

1. the theatre and the stage
2. the actors
3. the audience

D. We will conclude by identifying more similarities and differences between contemporary and Elizabethan drama and discussing the advantages and disadvantages of both.

E. I will ask for three volunteers to perform Act I scene i in class tomorrow and assign homework:

Read Act I scene i and write a short but complete explanation of how you would stage this scene.

### DAY 2

A. We transform the classroom to create a "rough" simulation of the structure and atmosphere of the Elizabethan theatre.

1. arrange the desks in a circle (not entirely closed in the front of the room) to simulate the galleries
2. leave standing room in front will represent the pit or yard
3. mark the thrust stage with tape on the floor

B. As the students arrange desks I will hand each (with the exception of my actors) a piece of paper assigning them a particular status in Elizabethan Society (a price will also be marked: onepenny, twopenny or threepenny, and groundlings could be handed a small bag of peanuts); the students are to determine their corresponding seating (or standing room) in the theatre (classroom):

1. groundlings (approx 5 students)
2. middle class (majority of the students)
3. upper class (approx.2-4 students)

The chaos of each one trying to find his/her seat or standing place is important. The three student volunteers will step outside and prepare their dramatic entrance as the three witches. Without directing the audience in any way I will play loud sound effects of a thunderstorm and let the witches enter to command the audience's attention.

C. After our brief performance, we will regroup and discuss the atmosphere of the audience, the challenges facing the actors and the success of the opening scene. Time allowing I will ask for volunteers to try out their intepretations of the scene; they may act as directors and select actors or act out the scene themselves.

D. To complete their picture of what an afternoon at the theatre was like in Elizabethan England, I would show the introduction of Lawrence Olivier's HENRY V.

## ALWAYS CONSIDER YOUR AUDIENCE...

When we write we always consider audience and purpose. Advertisers target an audience with their ads. Shakespeare too considered his audience; he had to satisfy the Elizabethan's love for spectacle, surprise, violence and horror. MACBETH meets these demands and offers much more.

I've asked my students how they would approach writing a play if they knew they had to appeal not only to fellow students but to the President of the United States as well. They bring up his interests, background, etc., but realize they would have to investigate a little more to determine what would impress him. Some would like to convey a message to him; the discussion takes off.

We have reason to believe Shakespeare had King James I in mind when he wrote MACBETH. Shakespeare did his homework. The Scotland setting, witches intervention in men's lives, elaborate spells and incantations are not just entertainment for the groundlings. James I wrote a book entitled DEMONOLOGY in which he asserted that witches "are channels through which the malignity of evil spirits might be visited upon human beings." Sakespeare possibly drew on this resource for some of the witches' lines in MACBETH.

Shakespeare also appeals to James I 's lively interest in ancestry. Banquo, an ancestor of James, is paid tribute in the play for his "royalty of nature" and "wisdom that doth guide his valour." Historically, however, Banquo was an accomplice to the murder of King Duncan.

Other scenes to consider which would hold significance for James:
-Act IV: the dumb show of eight Kings, all who resemble Banquo; some carry two orbs and three scepters, emblems of James I signifying his sovereignty over Scotland and

-Perhaps Act IV, iii also serves as a propaganda scene: Malcolm lists all the "king-becoming graces"

## AN APPROACH TO THE READING

To make sure the students are following and enjoying "the story" behind the verse, I incorporate the following throughout my unit:

For homework every night, the students are assigned a certain number of scenes to read. The following class day these scenes are read aloud, often performed, and/or excerpts are played on an audio cassette or video. Nightly reading is often accompanied by questions for discussion or a writing assignment; both aim to engage them in "active" reading. In addition, frequent, short pop quizzes evaluate students' comprehension and insure regular, studied reading.

The framework within which the students develop their understanding of the play is traditional. The elements of plot, character, setting, mood and theme are traced as the play progresses:

PLOT: What happens?
CHARACTER: Whom does this action involve? What are his/her traits? What are his/her ambitions, motivations, values?
SETTING: Where does the action take place? Describe the details of the setting. Does this setting hold any significance? Why?
MOOD: What is the atmosphere of the setting? What details create this atmosphere? How does this atmosphere parallel, highlight or contrast situation, character, or conflict?
THEME: What images or ideas are being repeated? What is their relevance to the story? What is their relevance to us?

These questions simply serve as a foundation for the students understanding. They can be addressed through homework questions, by way of brief introduction to or review of the assigned reading, or via a "story circle."

A **story circle** involves a story teller (the teacher at first) who narrates a scene (or few scenes) while the students sit in a circle around him/her. Appointing students as mime characters (literally pointing to them and bringing them to the "center stage") and posing them as s/he narrates the events, the story teller sets a scene in the middle of the circle. The story teller highlights setting, mood, character and conflict. This detail provides the mime actors with enough clues/cues so they can respond with movement, gesture and facial expression. This quick and enjoyable activity can clarify particularly confusing scenes for students who are having a more difficult time with the reading.

## PREREADING ACTIVITY

Students freewrite for 5 minutes on the word "ambition." and then share their responses with the class. Some freewrites may be anecdotal, others in the form of a definition or list of personal ambitions.

After an exchange, students discuss the pros and cons of ambition and I list responses on the board. Some questions to fuel discussion:

-To what extent can ambition be dangerous?
-Do the ends justify the means?
-Can you think of examples from history or news stories in which people who seemed moral and responsible turned, as a consequence of pressure or greed, into criminals?

This lively discussion usually explores personal choices and responsibility, motivations, intentions, character, culpability, frame of mind, etc. and establishes a good background for our analyses of characters' motivations and aspirations in MACBETH.

## CONSCIENCE/CONFLICT/EVIL/GUILT

Students are intrigued by the psychology in MACBETH; Shakespeare allows us to enter Macbeth's conscience, experience his inner turmoil, his increasing thirst for power and his eventual alienation and loneliness. The spiritual catastrophe in MACBETH parallels the catastrophe in Scotland. This parallel can be elicited from the students as the action in the play evolves.

We can trace Macbeth's moral decline in his soliloquys and asides. I ask the students to write journal entries from the point of view of Macbeth after each of the following speeches:

Act I, scene iii, lines 130-142
Act I, scene iv, lines 48-53
Act I, scene vii, lines 1-28
Act II, scene i, lines 33-64
Act III, scene i, lines 48-72
Act IV, scene i, lines 144-56
Act V, scene iii, lines 19-29
Act V, scene v, lines 9-15

Their entries should indicate very generally what has happened most recently (ie: the death of his wife) but more importantly, they should reflect his emotional, psychological and/or spiritual condition.

These journal responses keep the students focussed on the text, trigger excellent class discussion and enable them to draw relevant parallels with human experience.

## MOTIFS

The play is shrouded in darkness and rich in bloodshed. The first two scenes introduce the sinister, the chaotic and the brutal; recurring themes and images like these run throughout MACBETH intensifying action, character complexity and mood.

I list motifs on the board and ask them to head separate pages of their notebook with each of the following:

blood
fair is foul
darkness
threes (and multiples of threes)
sleeplessness

There are other motifs that can be added; as we progress I ask them to identify new motifs (time, infancy, clothing, etc.)

We discuss what each of these motifs could possibly suggest; for example, blood can suggest death, murder, war. As they read, I ask them to chart these motifs and their significance citing particularly powerful images and scenes.

These notes are a valuable tool for class discussion and a helpful resource for dramatic interpretation, critical and creative writing.

## DRAMA

Interpretation of dramatic speeches and scenes brings the play to life. Using the following exercise and the "dagger soliloquy" as a model, I prepare the students for their performance pieces.

### I. The Dagger Soliloquy

After discussing Macbeth's frame of mind before the murder, we bring this soliloquy to life. First, I ask each student to read a phrase and stop at the first point of punctuation: The first student reads, "Is this a dagger which I see before me," the second, "The handle toward my hand?" the third, "Come," and so on. The students read uninterruptedly going around the room.

How far we get through the soliloquy depends on the number of students. Before asking them to continue with the soliloquy by picking up another phrase, I ask them to stand up and determine an appropriate tone for each one's word, phrase or line. We go through the first part of the soliloquy once again emphasizing voice and tone. At this point the students really loosen up and begin to enjoy the dramatic possibilities of the speech.

For our third reading, I ask each one to add a gesture - what action is suggested by the words? Before this reading I have them work with the students to their right and left to determine effective gestures and movements. This time as each performs her portion of the soliloquy, her classmates imitate the dramatic interpretation. After this "coaching" round, the class performs the soliloquy in unison using the tone and gestures taught by their classmates.

If there are not enough students the speech can be completed by doubling portions of the soliloquy or by breaking the class into three groups; divide and assign the remaining lines to each group for dramatic interpretation.

This process leaves room for peer interaction and questions; the students can clarify and refine their interpretations of the text.

The famous dagger soliloquy is also an excellent speech to dramatize because it reveals Macbeth's plagued frame of mind and prompts questions such as:

-Is Macbeth hallucinating or are the witches responsible for this "air-drawn dagger"?
-How would you stage this scene? Is it better to see a dagger suspended before Macbeth? Why or why not?
-What happens to Macbeth as this speech progresses?

## II. Student Performance Pieces

A. At the end of the play, each student is required to perform a soliloquy or monologue (of at least 14 lines).

Suggested soliloquys or monologues:
(note they can be cut a little shorter)

1) Lady Macbeth's reflections on the letter, Act I, v: 15-30
"Glamis thou art, and Cawdor, and shalt be
What thou art promised...."

2) Lady Macbeth, Act I, v: 39-54
"The raven himself is hoarse..."

3) Macbeth, Act I, vii: 1-27
"If it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well..."

4) Macbeth III, i: 48-72
"To be thus is nothing, but to be safely thus-..."

5) Lennox III, vi: 1-24
"My former speeches have but hit your thoughts..."

6) Hecate, III, v: 2-33
"Have I not reasons, beldams as you are..."

B. Upon completion of Act I, the students are divided into four groups and each group is assigned one of the four remaining Acts. Students in each group will select a short scene, section of a longer scene or combination of scenes for performance. Each Act is given a performance date which corresponds with their reading due dates. Some class time will be blocked each week for group meetings; members of groups who have already performed will use the time to coach each other on individual performance pieces.
Some Guidelines:

- For both pieces students are encouraged to use simple props and costume accessories; elaborate dress or sets are not required.
-The groups performing scenes from the play have the option of rewriting the script in 20th century English or maintaining Shakespeare's language.
-The individual performance piece must be memorized, but the group piece need not be.

Criteria for judging comes from that used by the English Speaking Union in the National Shakespeare Competition (see attached).

## Topics for Short Writing/Discussion/Debate

Answers should reflect close reading and understanding of text.

1. In Act II, did Lady Macbeth truly faint or did she pretend to do so?

2. Who is the third murderer in Act III, scene 3? As a director how would you cast this murderer?

3. Write a screenplay for a filmed version of the banquet scene (III, iv). Would we actually see the ghost or would it be imagined? If you choose to show the ghost of Banquo describe its appearance. Base your directions on the action and imagery in the text

4. Write a comic strip illustrating the three apparitions and their prophecies in Act IV, scene 1.

## Writing Assignments - The Play as a Whole

1. A Marriage Made in Heaven...or Hell? Trace Macbeth and Lady Macbeth's relationship throughout the play. How does it

change as the events of the play unfold? What causes this change?

2. "Blood will have blood," Macbeth says in Act III, scene 4. Comment on the significance of this quote to the play as a whole.

3. How do the forces of nature parallel and/or emphasize the action of the play? Consider the elements of setting, mood, character and plot.

4. Do you sympathize with Macbeth at all by the end of the play? Why or why not?

5. What do you think Shakespeare is suggesting about the power of evil and the capacity of the human spirit in MACBETH?

**EVALUATION**

Evaluation in this unit will be based on:

1) ORAL WORK: daily class participation, teamwork and performance pieces
2) WRITTEN WORK: homework, journal entries, creative and analytical writing assignments
3) TEST and QUIZZES

R. O'Brien

King Lear

The following study guide is actually a synthesis of preparations I have created over a period of more than twenty years. I feel obliged to explain my method. Whenever I teach King Lear, I start a new notebook. I hardly ever refer to previous preparations. I read the play as if I had never read it before and I prepare new questions daily as I re-read. My method may seem inefficient but it has been educational advantageous, at least for me. I am constantly discovering something new in the play, something that I had not noticed before. Secondly, I am able to adapt the preparation to the particular class that I am teaching. Each night as I prepare I try to incorporate ideas introduced or questions raised in the class discussion conducted on that day. Consequently the agenda is being established by the class itself and not only by me. The one disadvantage to my method is that I now have about twenty notebooks on King Lear and no place to store them.

Nothing will come of nothing.

Act I, Scene 1

Read and analyze the brief conversation among Kent, Gloucester, and Edmund.

What do we learn about Lear from the conversation?

What do we learn about Gloucester and Edmund? How would you analyze their relationship?

How is Lear introduced to us by Shakespeare?

Why are France and Burgundy there?

What question does he ask both Goneril and Regan?

How would you compare and contrast their answers?

Why is Cordelia introduced through two asides and what do these asides tell us about her character?

Read the dialogue between Lear and Cordelia.

Analyze the cause of the conflict. Why is the conflict ironic?

On whose side is Shakespeare?

On whose side is Kent?

How does Lear alter his plans for his " retirement "?

Why does Kent make a reference to a " physician "?

Explain completely why Kent is banished.

Is there any difference in the way Lear speaks to Burgundy versus the way he speaks to France? Which man had Lear preferred for Cordelia?

How does Lear seem to define the word " Nature "?

Why is France really the right choice for Cordelia?

Read and analyze the dialogue among the sisters at the end of the scene.

What do we learn about their relationship to each other and to their father?

What possible thematic idea is Shakespeare introducing here?

Act I, Scene 2

Have Edmund's soliloquy read by several people in class.

How does Edmund define the word " Nature "? Is Edmund's definition the same as Lear's?

How does Edmund analyze his own illegitimacy?

How does Edmund demonstrate his philosophy of life in his relationship with his father?

What is the significance of Gloucester's use of the word " Nothing "?

Why does Gloucester refer to his legitimate son, Edgar, as " unnatural "?

What is the significance of the following quote; " I would unstate myself, to be in a due resolution "?

Explain Gloucester's belief in astrology.

Write a paraphrase of Edmund's reaction to his father's belief in astrology.

Explain how Edmund manipulates his half-brother Edgar.

Analyze Edmund's brief soliloquy at the end of the scene.

Has he analyzed Gloucester and Edgar accurately?

How is he using the word " nature " here?

Why does Shakespeare use rhyme in the soliloquy?

Act I, Scene 3

Read dialogue in class between Goneril and Oswald.

Why is the dialogue necessary?

Act I, Scene 4

How has Kent disguised himself?

How does he present himself to Lear?

What is the topic of the conversation between Lear and the Knight?

Why does Shakespeare arrange a confrontation between Kent and Oswald? What is the result of the confrontation?

Why has Shakespeare waited until now to introduce the Fool?

What is the Fool's advice for Kent?

How does he make use of his coxcomb to convey his ideas?

What example of figurative language does the Fool use to describe truth?

What is the significance of the poetic speech that the Fool teaches Lear?

How does Kent react to the speech? How would Edmund have reacted if he had heard it?

Read and explain the Fool's discussion of the sweet and bitter fools?

Why does the Fool request an egg?

Explain the meaning of the two songs that the Fool sings.

Why would the Fool like to learn to lie?

How does Shakespeare use the Fool to announce the arrival of Goneril?

What seems to be the Fool's relationship with Goneril?

Why does Lear ask Goneril if she is his daughter?

Why does Lear then ask several questions about himself?

How does the Fool answer Lear's most serious question?

In class, read dialogue among Lear, Goneril, and Albany.

Identify and analyze all references to animals.

Analyze Lear's concept of Nature.

Explain how Lear feels about himself and about Cordelia.

Lear leaves and then comes back again. Why does he confront Goneril once more?

How would you have an actor read Lear's words here?

Why does Shakespeare have the Fool leave with Lear?

How would you analyze the relationship between Goneril and Albany?

Act I, Scene 5

Read the dialogue between Lear and the Fool.

Ask class to raise questions on the dialogue.

After discussing the dialogue, have it read in class again.

Act II, Scene 1

What information does Edmund acquire from his conversation with Curan and why does the information please him?

In the following episode Edmund manipulates both Edgar and Gloucester. How does he do it?

Why does Gloucester refer to Edmund as a " natural boy "?

Why have Regan and Cornwall come to Gloucester's castle?

How does Regan try to alienate Gloucester from Lear?

How would you analyze the relationship between Regan and Cornwall versus that between Goneril and Albany?

How does Cornwall react to Edmund?

Act II, Scene 2

What is Kent's opinion of Oswald?

How does Kent use animal imagery to identify people like Oswald?

Why exactly does Cornwall punish Kent?

How do each of the following characters react to the punishment; Regan, Gloucester, and Kent?

Why does Shakespeare use apostrophe in Kent's reference to Fortune?

Act II, Scene 3

Read and analyze Edgar's soliloquy.

Discuss how it should be done on stage.

Act II, Scene 4

How does Lear react when he discovers Kent in the stocks?

How does the Fool react?

How does Kent explain the reason for his punishment? Is Kent's explanation accurate?

Why does the Fool refer to the " winter "?

What is the Fool's concept of Fortune? Would Kent agree or disagree?

How is Lear's physical condition affected by his circumstances?

Read and analyze closely the short dialogue between the Fool and Kent.

What is it exactly that the Fool tries to teach Kent?

What does the Fool mean when he refers to " a great wheel "?

Doea the Fool consider himself a wise man or a knave or both?

Would Shakespeare seem to agree or disagree with the Fool's philosophy of life?

What is the topic of Lear's conversation with Gloucester?

After Gloucester leaves, Lear and the Fool have a short dialogue. What role is the Fool playing here? Have there been any earlier examples when the Fool played the same role?

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The following episode should be done in class. Stop when Lear, Gloucester, Kent, and the Fool leave. Place the responsibility for asking questions on the class. Those students playing certain roles should try to answer the questions. Make sure that all examples of animal imagery are identified and analyzed. Do the same with all references to the word " nature." How would you analyze the reaction of Goneril and Regan at the end of act II?

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Act III, Scene 1

Why is the dialogue between Kent and the Gentleman necessary?

Act III, Scene 2

What is the first request Lear is making of nature?

What is the Fool's advice?

What is the second request Lear is making of nature?

What is the meaning of the Fool's poem? What is the connection between the meaning of the poem and the condition of Lear?

What does Kent mean when he refers to " man's nature "?

What is the third request that Lear makes of nature?

Lear says, " I am a man more sinned against than sinning." Do you think that Shakespeare agrees with Lear?

How has Lear changed here, especially in his relationship with the Fool?

What would be the thematic significance to the Fool's song about fortune?

( Usually I discuss the Fool's prophecy separately with the objective of clarifying its contribution, if any, to the play.)

### Act III, Scene 3

Discuss the example of irony in Shakespeare's use of the word " unnatural."

### Act III, Scene 4

Why is Lear not worried about the nature of his physical condition?

How does Lear feel about himself as a king?

What advice does he have for great men?

What does Lear mean when he says the following;

> Hast thou given all to thy two daughters? And art thou come to this?

What do these questions tell us about Lear's mental condition?

What is the cause of Lear's argument with Kent?

Analyze animal imagery in Tom's answer when Lear asks him what he has been.

What is it that Lear admires so much about Tom? How does he demonstrate his admiration?

Why doesn't Gloucester recognize Edgar?

Who does Lear believe that Tom is?

What questions do you Lear would like to ask Tom?

Why does Gloucester sympathize so readily with Lear?

### Act III, Scene 5

Read dialogue between Cornwall and Edmund. Decide whether or not Edmund is acting " naturally "?

### Act III, Scene 6

Assign roles and have the episode acted in class.

According to Kent, what characteristic of Lear's has been sacrificed to insanity?

What does the Fool mean when he says, " And I'll go to bed at noon "?

Read again and analyze Edgar's soliloquy at the end of scene 6.

Act III, Scene 7

How do Regan and Goneril disagree about the appropriate punishment for Gloucester?

Why must Edmund accompany Goneril home?

Assign roles and have the next episode done in class.

Analyze Shakespeare's tone toward Regan, Cornwall, and Gloucester.

In what way is the climax ironic for Gloucester?

Why are the three servants introduced into the play?

Act IV, Scene 1

Write a paraphrase of Edgar's soliloquy.

Analyze Gloucester's dialogue with the Old Man.

What has Gloucester learned from his tragedy?

Analyze Gloucester's use of a simile to explain man's relationship to the gods.

In what way does Gloucester's apostrophe to the Heavens reinforce something that Lear has already said?

Why does Gloucester ask to be taken to Dover?

Act IV, Scene 2

How has Oswald analyzed the change in Albany?

How does the infromation affect Goneril?

How do we know that there has been a development in Goneril's relationship with Edmund?

In class, read and analyze the dialogue between Goneril and Albany.

Identify examples of figurative language and imagery that convey the change in Albany.

How does the information from the messenger affect both Albany and Goneril?

How does the information synthesize the main plot with the secondary plot?

Act IV, Scene 3

Describe the picture created by the dialogue between Kent and the Gentleman.

How does Kent explain the difference between Cordelia and her sisters?

What has happened to Lear?

Why must Kent stay disquised?

Act IV, Scene 4

What picture of Lear is created by Cordelia's description?

What topic does Cordelia discuss with the Doctor?

What remedy for Lear does the Doctor recommend?

How does Shakespeare incorporate Cordelia into the creation of Lear's medicine?

Act IV, Scene 5

What thematic idea, verbalized by the Fool, is being demonstrated by the dialogue between Regan and Oswald?

Act IV, Scene 6

Analyze the " suicide " of Gloucester.

Analyze Gloucester's " prayer before dying."

How does Shakespeare try to make the " suicide " credible? Does he succeed?

What does Gloucester learn from his failed effort to kill himself? ( Connect to Lear's earlier requests for patience.)

The following episode requires a close in class analysis. The objective would be to explain the " Reason in madness " reflected in Lear's words. Here the teacher's role is only to facilitate the discussion and to encourage the students to come to some consensus about what Lear is saying about nature, old age, appearance versus reality, sex, mortality, love, justice, authority, wealth, politics, birth, etc..

Why does Lear refer to himself as " The natural fool of Fortune,"? Would Shakespeare agree? Substantiate your opinion with specific examples from the play.

Analyze the confrontation between Edgar and Oswald. What thematic idea is represented by the defeat of Oswald?

Act IV, Scene 7

Choose a " director " to assign roles and organize the staging of the reconciliation scene between Lear and Cordelia.

Have the " actors " explain the imagery in the language used by Lear and Cordelia.

Act V, Scene 1

What questions does Regan ask Edmund?

How does he answer her questions?

What do we learn about Goneril from her first aside?

Read and analyze Edmund's soliloquy at the end of the scene. Compare to Edmund's first soliloquy in act one.

Act V, Scene 2

Is the dialogue between Edgar and Gloucester necessary?

If you were directing the play, would you omit the dialogue? Explain why/why not.

Act V, Scene 3

Analyze the tone of Cordelia and Lear as they discuss their circumstances.

What thematic idea is demonstrated by the short conversation between Edmund and the Captain?

Analyze the verbal confrontation between Edmund and Albany.

Analyze the confrontation between Goneril and Regan.

Analyze the verbal and physical confrontation between Edmund and Edgar.

Why is it now possible for Edgar to defeat Edmund?

What does Edmund mean when he says that the wheel has come full circle?

Follow Edmund's verbal development until he says, " Some good I mean to do, Despite of mine own nature." Is Edmund a static or a dynamic character? Substantiate your choice and explain how each choice affects the theme of the play.

Assign roles and read the end of the play in class.

Analyze Shakespeare's use of language to convey Lear's emotional and psychological condition.

In some editions of the play, it seems that Albany, rather than Edgar, will be the new king. Which character would be the more appropriate choice? Substantiate your answer.

## Written Assignments

Original analyses. No secondary sources allowed.

Analyze the connection between King Lear and the following quote from the Book of Matthew;

> And brother shall deliver up brother to death and the father his child: and children shall rise up against parents, and cause them to be put to death.

Write an analysis on Shakespeare's use of the Fool. Be sure to include an explanation of the Fool's disappearance at the end of act III, scene 6.

Write an analysis of Shakespeare's use of the word " nature " to define character and to clarify theme.

Write an analysis of Shakespeare's references to animal imagery.

Possible research topic. Secondary sources required.

Investigate the history of the play. Identify and explain Shakespeare's source. Explain how Shakespeare adapted the original story. Explain how others have adapted Shakespeare's King Lear since its first production in 1606.

Lengthy writing topics. Secondary sources allowed.

Read Jane Smiley's novel titled A Thousand Acres ( Ballantine,1991 ). Compare and contrast the novel to the play, King Lear..

View the film Ran, directed by Akira Kurosawa. Compare and contrast the film to the play.

King Lear Test

Identify the speaker. Identify the character to whom he/she is speaking. Write a clear paraphrase of each quote. Choose Any Five

1. This is the excellent foppery of the world, that when we are sick in fortune - often the surfeit of our own behavior - we make guilty of our disasters the sun, the moon, and the stars, as if we were villains by necessity, fools by heavenly compulsion; knaves, thieves, and treachers by spherical predominance; drunkards, liars, and adulterers by an enforced obedience of planetary influence; and all that we are evil in, by a divine thrusting on - an admirable evasion of whoremaster man to lay his goatish disposition to the charge of a star!

We'll set thee to school to an ant, to teach thee there's no laboring i' the winter. All that follow their noses are led by their eyes but blind men and there's not a nose among twenty but can smell him that's stinking. Let go thy hold when a great wheel runs down a hill, lest it break thy neck with following it, but the great one that goes up the hill, let him draw thee after.

3. Let the great gods,
That keep this dreadful pother o'er our heads,
Find out their enemies now. Tremble, thou wretch,
That hast within thee undivulged crimes
Unwhipped of justice. Hide thee, thou bloody hand,
Thou perjured, and thou simular man of virtue
That art incestuous. Caitiff, to pieces shake,
That under covert and convenient seeming
Hast practiced on man's life. Close pent-up guilts,
Rive your concealing continents and cry
These dreadful summoners grace.

4. Yet better thus, and known to be contemned,
Than still contemned and flattered. To be worst,
The lowest and most dejected thing of fortune,
Stands still in esperance, lives not in fear.
The lamentable change is from the best,
The worst returns to laughter. Welcome then,
Thou unsubstantial air that I embrace!
The wretch that thou hast blown unto the worst
Owes nothing to thy blasts.

5. Here, take this purse, thou whom the Heavens' plagues
Have humbled to all strokes. That I am wretched
Makes thee the happier. Heavens, deal so still!
Let the superfluous and lust-dieted man,
That slaves your ordinance, that will not see
Because he doth not feel, feel your power quickly.
So distribution should undo excess
And each man have enough.

6. Through tattered clothes small vices do appear,
Robes and furred gowns hide all. Plate sin with gold
And the strong lance of justice hurtless breaks.
Arm it in rags, a pigmy's straw does pierce it.
None does offend, none, I say, none,
I'll able 'em.
Take that of me, my friend, who have
the power
To seal the accuser's lips. Get thee
glass eyes
And, like a scurvy politician, seem
To see the things thou dost not.

## KING LEAR

Think'st thou that duty shall have dread to speak
When power to flattery bows? To plainness honor's bound
When majesty stoops to folly. Reverse thy doom,
And in thy best consideration check
This hideous rashness.

These late eclipses in the sun and moon portend no good to us.
Though the wisdom of nature can reason it thus and thus, yet nature
finds itself scourged by the sequent effects. Love cools, friendship
falls off, brothers divide. In cities, mutinies; in countries discord;
in palaces, treason; and the bond cracked 'twixt son and father.

Oh, reason not the need. Our basest beggars
Are in the poorest thing superfluous.
Allow not nature more than nature needs,
Man's life's as cheap as beast's.

When we our betters see bearing our woes'
We scarcely think our miseries our foes.
Who alone suffers suffers most i' the mind,
Leaving free things and happy shows behind.
But then the mind much sufferance doth o'erskip
When grief hath mates, and bearing fellowship.

Let the superfluous and lust-dieted man,
That slaves your ordinance, that will not see
Because he doth not feel, feel your power quickly.
So distribution should undo excess
And each man have enough.

That nature which contemns it origin
Cannot be bordered certain in itself.
She that herself will sliver and disbranch
From her material sap, perforce must wither
And come to deadly use.

Through tattered clothes small vices do appear,
Robes and furred gowns hide all. Plate sin with gold
And the strong lance of justice hurtless breaks.
Arm it in rags, a pigmy's straw does pierce it.
None does offend, none, I say, none, I'll able 'em.

The gods are just, and of our pleasant vices
Make instruments to plague us.
The dark and vicious place where thee he got
Cost him his eyes.

A man may see how this world goes with no eyes. Look with thine
ears. See how yond Justice rails upon yond simple thief. Hark,
in thine ear. Change places and, handy-dandy, which is the Justice,
which is the thief.

All that follow their noses are led by their eyes but blind men,
and there's not a nose among twenty but can smell him that's stinking.
Let go thy hold when a great wheel runs down a hill, lest it break
thy neck with following it, but the great one that goes up the hill,
let him draw thee after.

*King Lear* Test

Identify the character who says each of the following quotes.

1. Nothing will come of nothing.

2. Kill thy physician and the fee bestow
Upon the foul disease.

3. Love's not love
When it is mingled with regards that stand
Aloof from the entire point.

4. 'Tis the infirmity of his age. Yet he hath ever but slenderly known himself.

5. Thou, Nature, art my goddess, to thy law
My services are bound.

6. Truth's a dog must to kennel. He must be whipped out, when Lady the brach may stand by the fire and stink.

7. How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is
To have a thankless child!

8. None of these rogues and cowards
But Ajax is their fool.

9. Allow not nature more than nature needs,
Man's life's as cheap as beast's.

10. The younger rises when the old doth fall.

11. My tears begin to take his part so much
They'll mar my counterfeiting.

12. As flies to wanton boys are we to the gods,
They kill us for their sport.

13. Proper deformity seems not in the fiend
So horrid as in woman.

14. When we are born, we cry that we are come
To this great stage of fools.

15. O you kind gods,
Cure this great breach in his abused nature!
The untuned and jarring senses, oh, wind up
Of this child-changed father!

16. I had rather lose the battle than that sister
Should loosen him and me.

17. Come, let's away to prison.
We two alone will sing like birds i' the cage.

18. The wheel is come full circle, I am here.

19. I have a journey, sir, shortly to go.
My master calls me, I must not say no.

20. He childed as I fathered.

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